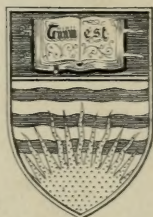


# THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD

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THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA





# THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

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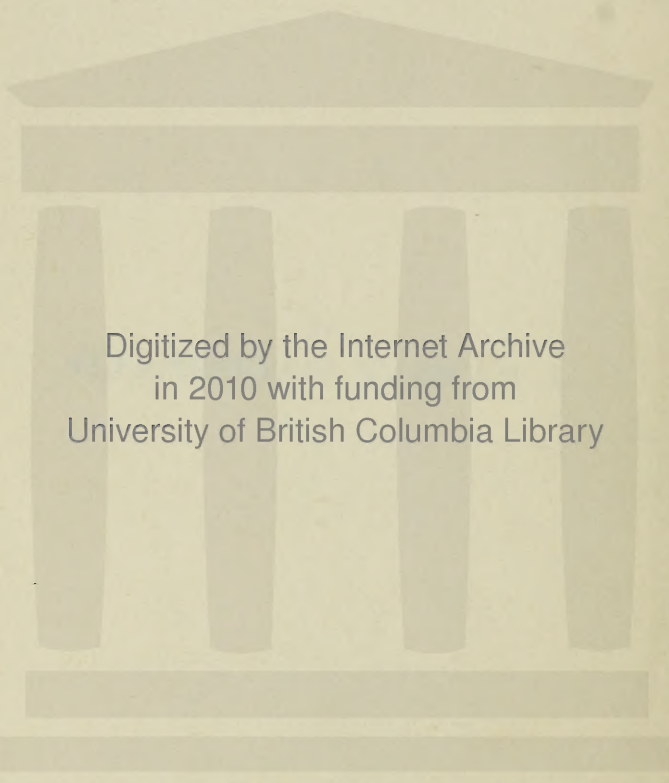
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## P R E F A C E

THIS book was written in all its substantial parts before the Government took steps to meet the conditions which the war had created in India. I venture to publish it, however, because it indicates a different point of view from that which appears to be animating the Government, though in some respects their practical proposals do not materially differ from mine, but also—and this is the chief reason—because during the time of transition upon which we are entering, and which the Montagu-Chelmsford Report does no more than inaugurate, it is important that we should understand the origin and evolution of our Indian connections. India is a going concern, a problem in organic politics. Its needs cannot be met by an adjustment here and an adjustment there; they have to be viewed in their wide sweep. This spirit will have to be maintained after the Montagu-Chelmsford Report has produced its first harvest of legislation.

I must acknowledge with gratitude the assistance I have had from some of the worthiest men who maintain our best traditions in the Government of India. Much of what is in this book is theirs, and in writing it I have always kept their problems and their trials in mind. The effect of the war upon publishing is responsible for a long delay in the appearance of the book.

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD.



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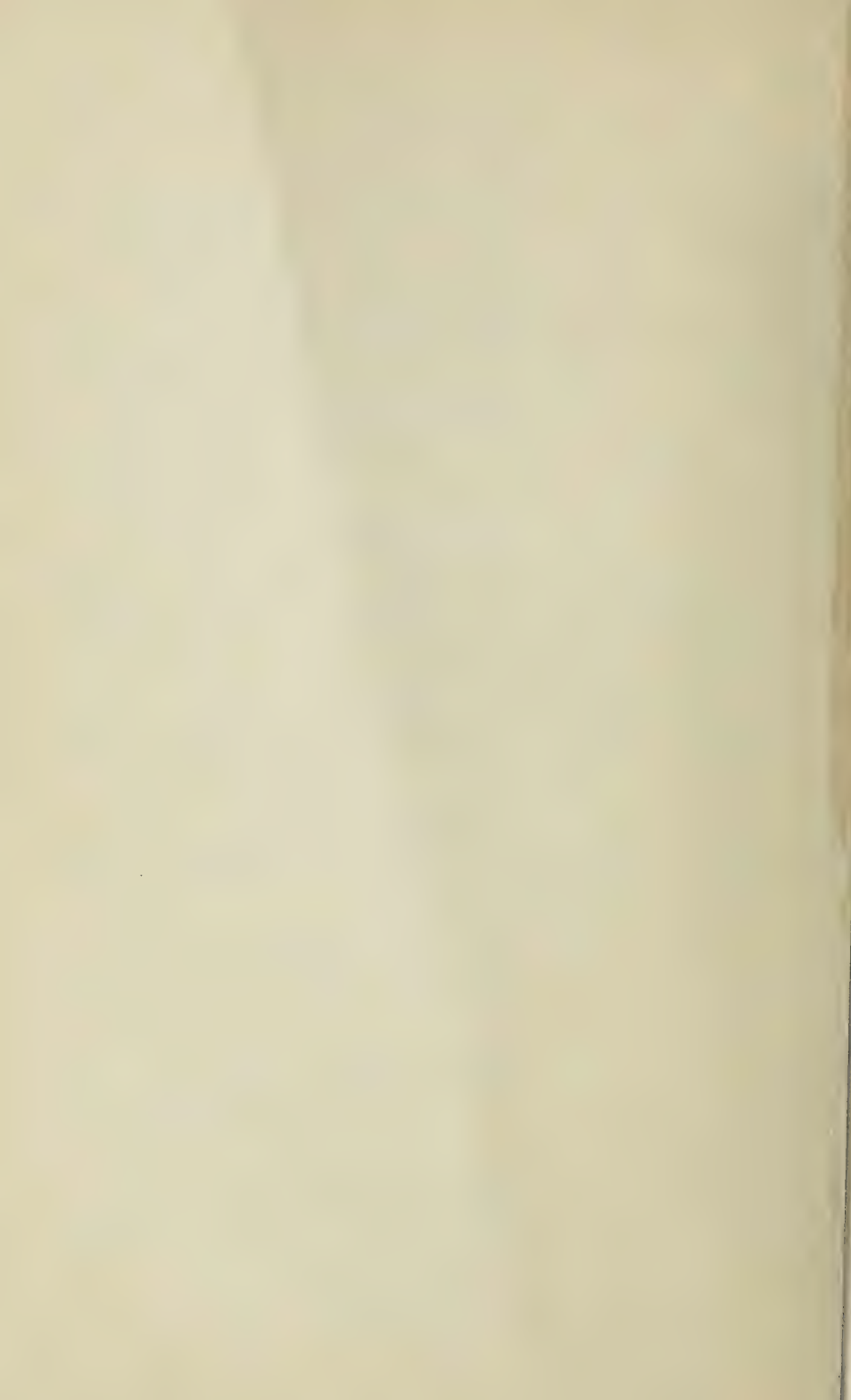
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# THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

## INTRODUCTORY

### THE RISE OF NATIONALISM

PUBLIC opinion in this country is like a sea upon which the barques of Governments float; in India, it is like a sea beating against a coast, being rebuffed here and eating in its way there. Here, public opinion touches and emanates from the whole people, its sections represent conflicts in views of national ends, and it is responsible; in India, opinion is sectionalised in a totally different way. There is the public opinion of the British community, which is mainly commercial, and has in time come to be inspired by the mentality of a foreign race in possession; there is the public opinion of the steadily increasing section of educated Indians, which is not divided into Government and Opposition parties, but which is itself the Opposition, not responsible but critical; the mental state of the great masses does not amount to a public opinion, because it is concerned with the small local interests of a population whose world is its village.

The public opinion of the British community presents no great problems to the Government, except occasionally, as in the case of the Ilbert Bill, when it displays all the dangers of the opinion of a section in possession animated by two of the most reactionary of all political impulses—that of a superior race and that of an economically exploiting community.

If its sense of security or its political dominance is threatened, it becomes vocal; and then through its press and its connections it becomes formidable, and can control the Government. It is from the public opinion of the educated and politically-minded Indian, however, that the great problems of Indian Government arise. The voiceless state of the masses imposes a responsibility upon the Government without providing it with clear guidance on political and diplomatic problems.

The contact between Great Britain and India awoke India. Educationalists like Hare, missionaries like Carey, administrators like Macaulay, taught the Indian Western modes of thought. The Indian read the historical and political works of the West, and they opened up a new world for him which he very soon entered with bold feet. The long-drawn-out swill of the French Revolution reached him,<sup>1</sup> and he thought as one to whom that Revolution was an inheritance. Now, the political philosophy and axioms of the West are an essential part of Indian life, and when its education came to India it brought with it the politics of nationality, liberalism, freedom. At first there was a revolt in social and religious custom. Everything native from dress to food, from ritual to social habits, was thrown off like a garment out of fashion. Everything Indian was old, superstitious, in a neglected backwater. At the same time the native newspaper and critical journal made its appearance, first of all under missionary auspices. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century the political harvest of this change began to ripen, and those men who had been educated in the English schools, or had come into close contact with British influences, began to take a definite interest in the government of their country. The period of mere revolt and copying had ended, and that of orderly assimilation and adaptation had begun. A dramatic little story is told of the founding of the Brahmo Samaj. The rebels had been worshipping for some time in a Unitarian

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Ramtanu Lahiri*, by Sir Roper Lethbridge, p. 75.

chapel under an English minister. "One Sunday evening, as he (Rammohan Roy) was returning home from prayers with his friends, Tarachand Chakravartti and Chandra Sikhar Deb, the latter, in course of conversation, said to him, 'Dewanjee, we now go to a house of worship where a foreigner officiates. Should we not have a place where we might meet and worship God in our own way?'"<sup>1</sup> That impulse of "our own way" was the assertion of the quickening Indian nationalism asserting itself through Western influences, and this was by and by to find still more complete and satisfactory expression in politics.

The newspaper was freed in 1835, and the group of young Indians who had been fighting for religious and social reform began to think of an Indian press. Political fights with the Government had hitherto been carried on by Europeans—again commonly by missionaries. George Thomson, the anti-slavery orator, came to India in 1842 with Dwarkanath Tagore—the father of the poet—and delivered political addresses which stirred young and emancipated Calcutta, and two years later the pilgrimage of youths from India to receive education in England began. Criticism of the Government continued through the press, at meetings, and by associations like the Bombay Association, started in 1848. Some of these associations collapsed in time, but left behind them the soil from which successors sprang up. Lord Lytton's tenure of office (1876–80) was attended by continued protests and attacks from vocal Indian opinion (when men like Telang came to the fore as antagonists of the Government); Lord Ripon's (1880–84) by equally vocal support (the Ilbert Bill letting loose a flood which brought political agitation in India to its highest level). Political currents were then running strong, especially in the centres of Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. But the movement was not organised. In 1883 the Indian Association of Calcutta called a National Conference at which representatives from Bengal, Madras,

<sup>1</sup> *Ramtanu Lahiri*, p. 77.



Bombay, and the United Provinces were present. That year a circular was addressed to the students of Calcutta by Mr. Allan Octavian Hume, asking them to devote themselves to India, and as a result the Indian National Union was formed ; and in 1884 a few gentlemen who had been attending a Conference held in Adyar, Madras, by the Theosophical Society, met and formed certain Provincial committees for the purpose of calling without delay a conference of the Indian National Union. This met in Bombay in December 1885—Poona, where it was to have met, having been visited by the plague—under the title of the Indian National Congress. Since then it has met each year at Christmas in one or other of the larger towns throughout India, and has been attended by some thousand delegates, appointed in a somewhat loose way by Provincial Committees. Since 1889 it has had a Committee in London which it finances and which publishes the weekly journal *India*. Thus India became politically articulate.

The resolutions passed from year to year at this Congress are the best indications of what interests are stirring in the mind of India. The first passed at the first Congress called for the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of the Indian administration ; the second, for the abolition of the Secretary of State's Council as being " the necessary preliminary to all other reforms " ; the third demanded an expansion of Legislative Councils ; the fourth formulated the historical claim for simultaneous examinations ; the fifth protested against the increasing military expenditure and asked Great Britain to guarantee the Indian debt ; the sixth declared that Upper Burma ought not to be added to India, but be made a Crown Colony ; the eighth referred the resolutions passed to the Provincial political associations.

Into a detailed history of the Congress I do not propose to enter. At first it was received with no official disfavour, and some officials actually attended it ; but from the beginning

the Government as a whole was hostile to what the *Times* correspondent described as "the Indian nation meeting together for the first time."

When it started, the Government was not sure in what relations the new movement would stand to it. It might be a consultative assembly which was to be a channel down which grievances were to run to Government offices. If so, it was to be countenanced. But it might be an Opposition, speaking undoubtedly so that the Government could hear, but acting as an independent political organ of Indian opinion. In that case, the Government would, sooner or later, be hostile. The matter was soon settled. It became an Opposition—an inevitable development.

When Mr. Hume saw Lord Dufferin at Simla and considered with him the project to bring together every year the leaders of Indian opinion to discuss affairs, Lord Dufferin remarked that as there could be no Parliamentary Opposition in India as in Britain, the Government would welcome such a proposal<sup>1</sup>, and when the second Congress met in Calcutta in 1886, the Viceroy invited the members to a garden party, and Lord Connemara repeated the invitation the following year when the Congress met in Madras. Indeed, so cordial were the relations between the heads of the Indian Government and the promoters of the Congress that Lord Reay, then Governor of Bombay, was suggested as President, and apparently only considerations of official caution led to other arrangements having to be made. The Government mind was then liberal. Government officials at first attended and took some part in the discussions.<sup>2</sup> Speaking at a St. Andrew's Club dinner in Calcutta in 1887, however, Lord Dufferin criticised the Congress, and his attack was the subject of some scathing sentences in a speech delivered by Mr. Telang at the Allahabad

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Wedderburn indeed says that it was apparently on Lord Dufferin's advice that the Congress dealt with political and not social matters (*Allan Octavian Hume*, pp. 59-60).

<sup>2</sup> *The Indian National Congress*, Natesan, Madras, p. 4.



Congress a few weeks later. The definite departure was made at the third Congress at Madras, when "the agitating policy of the Anti-Corn Law League" was approved, and in 1890 the Government of India officially stated that the Congress belonged to that class of conference which private individuals may legitimately promote, but from which "Government officials are necessarily debarred."<sup>1</sup> The abler leaders like Mr. Telang had no intention of confining the business of the Congress or the tone and purpose of its discussions to those limits which a gathering of a semi-official character would have had to adopt. They were opposed to the Government, and the resolution demanding representative Provincial Councils, adopted by the first Congress and developed in later ones, indicated that purpose. Moreover, they had something to say about policy, about taxation, and so on, which was quite different in its intent from Lord Dufferin's original notions. Every one of the earlier meetings of the Congress gave it more and more of the character of an Opposition. For that reason it associated itself quite openly with that section of British opinion represented by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright, and with Indian policy of the character of that of Lord Ripon; for that reason the Mohammedans declined to associate with it, as their leaders preferred to follow the suggestions made by Lord Dufferin and to remain in alliance with the Government. For that reason also, from the moment that it first met in Bombay, the National Congress was bound to fulfil the functions and services of an Opposition to the Government—not a friendly, consultative Opposition, but an Opposition which challenged the status and the authority of the Government.

In taking up this position the Congress naturally met with the opposition of the Government and of the British community. From this arose the volume of charges of disloyalty, of designs

<sup>1</sup> This was the rule till 1916, when Sir James Meston, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, officially visited the Congress meeting that year at Lucknow.

to end the British connection, and so on. None of these had ever any substance or foundation, but were the ordinary expedients which are adopted in political life to embarrass an opponent and make his work unpopular. A certain section of people in the end believe in them, and they are added to those errors and prejudices which, like barnacles and weed on the bottom of a ship, retard progress.

A really serious matter was the attitude of the Mohammedans to the Congress. Taking the two communities as a whole, there was no confidence, but a good deal of hostility, between Hindus and Mohammedans. Mohammedans had fallen behind in education and push, and to fight side by side with the Hindus they feared would result in their perpetual subordination. Their leaders therefore decided that their community would do best for itself if it kept out of any movement to organise an Opposition to the Government, and they adopted the policy of representation by deputation and concession by private influence.

The Mohammedan community had not been subject to such a revolt as disturbed Hinduism at the beginning of last century, when English schools were established in Calcutta and young Hindus threw off the restraints of their religion and customs. The Mohammedan offered a more sullen resistance to missionary effort, and indeed, later on, made it one of the causes of the Mutiny, and his mulvis kept a firm grip upon his education. His opposition to the Government was military and historical rather than political. But he was surrounded by a new life which increased in vigour, and which would have stifled him had he not accommodated himself to it. He mutinied, and was crushed ruthlessly after his short orgy of triumph. Then he sank again and slowly emerged, terribly handicapped by his long neglect of chances.

Hindus have a long gallery of leaders in their early struggles for influence; Mohammedans have but one—Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and this remarkable man was responsible for the attitude taken up by his people.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was born in Delhi on April 17th, 1817, and could trace his ancestry to Mohammed on both sides. He was educated at home by his mother, who was one of those able women full of worldly capacity and of no mean learning who, in spite of European notions, are not uncommon in secluded Mohammedan households. At the age of eighteen he entered the service of the East India Company, and in his private relationships held intimate intercourse with the Mohammedan literary circles of Delhi. He was Munsif in 1841, wrote a volume on the architecture and tombs of Delhi, and his interests were divided between literature and law. When the Mutiny broke out, he spent himself in the service of the Company, and when it was over, in protecting his people from the horrors of massacre and unjust judgment which followed. He declined an offer made to him by the Government to become proprietor of a wealthy estate forfeited by a rebel chief. When peace was secured, he was possessed by the terrible prospect which faced his people. They were distrusted, they were ignorant, they were poverty-stricken. He determined to change all that. In 1858 he wrote his pamphlet on the causes of the Indian Mutiny to try to remove some of the prejudices against Mohammedans. The fundamental fault, he argued, was the division between the governed and the governor. There was nothing existing in Indian government "to warn us of the dangers before they burst upon us and destroyed us." He asked that native opinion should be represented on Legislative Councils. In particular he pleaded that the Mohammedan faith should be kept pure, and that officers of the Government should be discouraged from pursuing a policy, upon which they were said to have been very keen after the Mutiny, of openly supporting the preaching of missionaries and of giving official sanction to Christian propaganda. This was destroying all attempts by the State to educate the people, because the school suspected of proselytising was held in disfavour by Mohammedans. The colleges were equally suspected. The studies which the



Mohammedan considered almost sacred dropped out of college curricula. Whilst this state of mind lasted, the Mussulman sulked in his tent. Such was Sir Syed's line of argument.

Sir Syed desired to establish a working agreement between East and West, and he appealed to the Mohammedan to become educated. He began in 1861. As the years went on he became less and less of a religious reformer and more and more of an educationalist whose aim was to reform and vivify the whole life of his community. In 1863 he formed a society to translate standard English works into Urdu, so that the Mussulman might come in contact with European thought and culture, and that Islamism might become liberalised by that contact. In 1870 he set about the establishment of a paper which disturbed the conservative equanimity of his people as Hindu papers had stirred Hinduism thirty or forty years before. Thus to some extent he led his people on the path which Raja Rammohan Roy had led his. But he did not go so far. His work gradually matured until the foundation-stone of Alighur was laid in 1877. Sir Syed had no English education, but it was whilst he was in England, studying our English institutions, that the characteristics of Alighur formed in his mind. The reasons for the separate college were : (1) There were few Mohammedans in Government schools and colleges. (2) Government education was suspected of being anti-Mohammedan. (3) Mohammedans desired a separate college.

Sir Syed was no sycophant in his politics, however. In 1866 he took an active part in forming the British Indian Association, which is rightly regarded as the forerunner of the National Congress, and he appealed to Indians to be more honestly outspoken as regards their political grievances and more assiduous in interesting the Imperial Parliament in the affairs of their country. He himself was a member of the Legislative Council from 1878 to 1883. There he opposed the election of representatives on Indian public bodies on the ground that minorities in race, creed, and caste would be

crushed out; but still he felt the catholic nationality of India, and he said in 1884: "We [Hindus and Mohammedans] should try to become one heart and soul, and act in unison. If united, we can support each other. . . . We must each and all unite for the good of the country which is common to all." Of the Bengalis he wrote about the same time: "I assure you that Bengalis are the only people in our country whom we can properly be proud of, and it is only due to them that knowledge, liberty, and patriotism have progressed in our country. . . . In the word Nation I include both Hindus and Mohammedans, because that is the only meaning which I can attach to it." And yet, when the Congress met in 1885, he was lukewarm. For three years he watched, and then came out in definite opposition. It was "not moderate and reasonable in its aspirations," nor sufficiently careful about the interests of "minorities, and very far from respectful or fair in its tone" to the Government. It believed too much in the "principles of government borrowed from the West into the East without regard to the safeguards required by the different circumstances" <sup>1</sup> of India.

Sir Syed's attitude decided that of the bulk of Mohammedans, tended to widen the gulf between them and the Hindus, and strengthened the position of the conservative elements amongst them. It also had, for some time, an unfortunate influence on the Government, and not only encouraged it to harden its attitude to the Congress, but to take opportunities to pacify Mohammedan leaders and use them against the Hindu leaders. If, with Parliamentary thoughts in mind, we speak of the Congress as an Opposition, we may aptly say of the Mohammedan that he took his seat on the benches below the gangway on the Government side.

Yet this could not abide. It was shortsighted politics; Sir Syed's great educational work was turning out a young generation of Mohammedans moulded in the same intellec-

<sup>1</sup> Statement by Nawab Mushtaque Husain in explanation of Sir Syed's position.

tual moulds as the Hindu leaders; and there were from the very beginning some Mohammedans who did not share Sir Syed's later views and who associated themselves with the Congress.

The President of the third Congress was a Mohammedan, Mr. Budrudin Tyabji, and he paid some attention in his address to the attitude which the Mohammedans took to the gathering. He said: "I must honestly confess to you that one great motive which has induced me in the present state of my health to undertake the grave responsibilities of presiding over your deliberations, has been an earnest desire on my part to prove, as far as my power lies, that I, at least, not merely in my individual capacity, but as representative of the Anjuman-i-Islam of Bombay, do not consider that there is anything whatever in the position or the relations of the different communities in India—be they Hindus, Mussulmans, Parsees, or Christians—which should induce the leaders of any one community to stand aloof from the others in their efforts to obtain those great general reforms, those great general rights, which are for the common benefit of all, and which, I feel sure, have only to be earnestly and harmoniously pressed upon Government to be granted to us." Mr. Tyabji spoke for the more educated Mohammedans in the urban areas like Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta; but he did not speak for the mass of his people in those districts where they were in the majority and had not been brought under Western political and social influence. There, Sir Syed Ahmed ruled.

For some years the Mohammedan pressed his own claims for education, office, and representation. The pace was undoubtedly made by Congress and the movement which it focussed, and the Mohammedan saw to it that he had his share in the advance. Through all the troublous times which followed, he was blamed for being the tool of the Government, and the disputes between him and the Hindu, especially in Lord Curzon's time, were frequent and bitter. When the Councils Act was put on the Statute Book and the represen-



tation of communities secured, the storm rapidly subsided. The advocates of communal representation had justified themselves—not by the fruits which they expected, but by uniting Hindu and Mohammedan on common tasks of endeavour and criticism.

Sir Syed Ahmed had done his work. His community had bestirred itself, had regained importance, and it began to feel that it could not act for ever the part of the mendicant. The facts about Indian nationalism to which Sir Syed had given expression came up like a new regiment into the field. Congress kept raising issues which Mohammedans could not oppose, kept appealing to feelings to which Mohammedans could not help responding; and the Hindus on the Legislative Councils drew their Mohammedan colleagues to them in the same way. When all was said and done, they were Indians, they had to face the same problems, agree and disagree with the same Government, and look in the same direction for the goals where they expected to find satisfaction. The masses of the two communities below might remain opposed in their ignorance, and might riot against each other at their religious festivals; the educated people at the top constantly found themselves comrades in the same battle where common interests counted for much, where differences counted for little, and where separatist superstitions were reduced to formalisms remote from practical political issues.<sup>1</sup>

Alighur had sent out its educated men, and they found their roads converging upon those where the educated Hindus stood a generation before. A Moslem Congress party arose, inspired by educated Mohammedans, and papers were pub-

<sup>1</sup> This is only what might be expected from the experience of certain Native States. In Mysore, for instance, the most cordial relations between Indians and Mohammedans are the rule. There one reads of Mohammedans agreeing to close their cemeteries for sanitary reasons, approaching Hindus at festival times stating that they have no objection to music being played whilst processions are passing mosques, giving vegetarian feasts to their co-religionists at times of rejoicing. In this State the tradition carefully nurtured by practice is that the two communities shall co-operate and share in the public life of the State.

lished on Congress lines. In 1912 the Moslem League was founded. At first it sniffed at the Congress; it did homage to Sir Syed; like the devotee who feels heresy sprouting in his heart, it proclaimed its orthodoxy with loud fervour; but its drift inevitably was towards the Congress. In 1913, at a public meeting at Cawnpore, the Hon. Mazar-ul-Haque, a leading Mohammedan, said: "The Anti-Congress Mussulman is fast becoming an extinct species and will have soon to be searched for in some archaeological museum."

When a Mohammedan press of critical politics appeared like the *Comrade*, it found it had no possible line open for it except that upon which the organs of Hindu Nationalism were running. The end was only a matter of time.

In 1916 the leaders of the two movements came together and discussed agreements, with the result that a common manifesto was issued containing the following points:

1. That Provincial Legislative Councils should consist of four-fifths elected and one-fifth nominated members; that the franchise should be as broad as possible, and that Mohammedans should be separately elected to a fixed proportion of seats; that the President should be elected by the Council; that the Council should have wide legislative powers.

2. That Provincial Governors should not belong to the Indian Civil Service; that there should be Executive Councils in each Province upon which members of the Civil Service should not sit, but half of which should be elected by the Legislative Council.

3. That four-fifths of the Imperial Legislative Council should be elected from the same registers as were used for the Provincial Councils, and that one-third should be Mohammedans; that the President should be elected by the Council itself; that it should have freedom in legislation and authority in finance, including powers over tariffs and commercial legislation.

4. That the Governor-General should be head of the Government, and should have an Executive Council half of which

should be Indian and be elected by the Imperial Legislative Council; that in legislative and administrative affairs the Government of India should be free from interference by the Secretary of State, and should not interfere with powers delegated to the Provincial Governments.

5. That the Council of the Secretary of State should be abolished and his salary put on the British estimates; that he should hold the same position to India that the Secretary for the Colonies does to the Dominions; and that he should have two Under-Secretaries, one of whom should be an Indian.

6. That India should be represented on all Imperial Committees, and that the British citizenship of Indians should be recognised in all parts of the Empire.

7. That in all Imperial military and naval services Indians should be treated on an equality with other British subjects, and be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

8. That the Judiciary should be separated from the Executive.

This is another joining of the waters, and the stream of Indian Nationalism now runs in greater force and volume. Hinduism and Mohammedanism are not political distinctions. They divided Indian society so long as that society was not political. But the last of these old generations is dying out, and the young men respond to other calls.

In tracing the evolution of nationalism amongst the Mohammedans, I have overrun the course of events in the Congress, and as they are important, I must return to them.

The Congress had met, resolved, and demonstrated for twenty years, and the results of its labours so far had been disappointing. A left wing of impatient men grew, and both the optimism and the authority of the old Congress leaders were challenged. It was felt that the mild methods of Congress, with its deputations to London and its annual declarations of needs, would never compel the governing bureaucracy to listen, and never gather behind them such a force of public opinion as would make the organisation a political power in



India. Nor was that the only fault. The younger men were not satisfied with the Congress spirit. They wanted something more strenuous, something more thorough ; they wanted a crusade that would stir the heart of India, something with more self-respect and independent challenge. In their own hearts, India had revived. It is all but impossible for the governing race to understand the feeling of a youth suddenly aware that it belongs to a subject race ; it is difficult for the people of that race who accept the comforts of the rulers to realise it. But to one who looks on as a keenly critical spectator, seeing everything in an uncoloured light and trying to understand what he sees, the extraordinary revival of Indian Nationalism from 1905 appears to be a miracle. The partition of Bengal produced a new Bengali—a man who could organise, fight, assassinate. For the darker extremes of suppressed nationalism also began to appear, and in 1908 the first act of terrorism took place.

The weak handling of Lord Elgin and the masterful rule of Lord Curzon had, each in its own way, bred extremism among Indian Nationalists. Lord Curzon did not stay long enough in India to feel the blast he was releasing, and which his two successors had to endure.

In the early winter of 1905 a Liberal Government was formed at home, and Mr. (afterwards Lord) Morley became Secretary of State. His appointment put India on expectant tiptoe. "Now," the Congress leaders said, "we shall have our reward." But Mr. Morley found the burden heavy, and however valiant a shoulder he put to it, he could barely move it. The Secretary of State for India is not his own master. The extremists made the most of the opportunities which Mr. Morley's difficulties gave them, and the slow lumbering of the coach enabled them to jeer as Elijah jeered at the false prophets. With renewed vigour they attacked the "mendicant policy" of the Congress, and found heroes and models in the Nihilists, who felt that nothing but the bomb would burst the bonds of the common people of Russia. That,

however, was only a small section of extremists. The other and by far the larger section remained a left wing of the Constitutional movement. It is always hard to do justice to men in the midst of the storms they have raised, and their opponents are rarely chivalrous or just enough to strive to do them justice. In another chapter of this book I describe the recent Hindu reaction, and most of the Constitutional extremists belonged to that school. They believed in India and did not believe in Europe. They believed in their own civilisation and not in ours. Their ideal was an India sitting on her own throne, mistress of her own destiny, doing homage to her own past. They shook the Government more than it has been shaken since the Mutiny.

At the Benares meeting in 1905 there was trouble. At Calcutta, in 1906, the Extremists, as they had come to be called, went from the meeting, but the places they left vacant were hardly visible. Nevertheless they represented a great body of young and aggressive opinion. In fact, Lord Curzon's administration was alienating in a wholesale way Indian educated opinion on account of its supine disregard of Indian feelings and thoughts. For the time being, the conditions of the peaceful government of an acquiescing people were rapidly departing from India. The Congress itself had to move, and at Calcutta it so far reflected vigorous opinion outside as to pass resolutions in favour of self-government such as is enjoyed by the Dominions, a national system of education, and the creation of native industries and the boycott of imported goods that competed with Indian manufactures. Self-government was no new item of the Congress programme, but it was reaffirmed at Calcutta with an emphasis and in circumstances which threw down the gauntlet with some force; the education resolution was aimed at the policy then pursued of officialising the Universities and of making higher education a kind of Government nursery; the others were economic replies to political grievances.

The twelve months which followed were ruffled by agita-

tion and unsettlement. The Congress gained no influence; the left wing grew both in authority and activity. The 1907 meeting was to have been held at Nagpur, but the conflict which awaited the gathering disrupted the Congressmen of that district and Surat was fixed upon. Garrulous rumour was busy. The Congress was to be guilty of surrender on this point and on that, precious to the Extremists. The assembling delegates went into two camps pitched some miles from each other. Over one Mr. Tilak ruled; over the other, Dr. Rashbehary Ghose, the elect President. There was to be a contest for the Presidency, but Mr. Lajput Rai declined the Extremist nomination. Negotiations went on; deputations came and went between the two camps, and excitement rose. Before the opening of the Congress enthusiasts addressed their followers assembled early in the tent. The tension reached breaking-point before it was time for the official actors to appear. At the very opening the storm burst, and the sitting was suspended, leaving Mr. Surendranath Banerjea overwhelmed by the hostile demonstration. On the following day matters were worse. Within a few minutes of the opening a serious riot raged within the tent, and the sittings were suspended *sine die*. After a day's interval a remnant of 900 delegates—the original delegation numbered 1,600—met and decided to remit to a committee the framing of a constitution for the Congress. Indian nationalism had received a heavy blow—at the time it might have been its death-blow. Its old leaders, though a majority was still behind them, were nevertheless shorn of their glory, and the Congress was discredited.

This happened at a most unfortunate time. The spirit of the administration was changing, Mr. Morley was about to produce his Councils Bill, and the most formidable of all Indian political organisations was crippled just when Indian unity was most required and a concentration of Indian public opinion would have been most useful.

Outside, Bengal in particular and Bombay to some extent



were seething with discontent. Papers like the *Bande Mataram* were suppressed; the National Education Association was formed to supply a college education apart from the Government; the industrial boycott was raging; Arabindo Ghose, Har Dayal, Bipin Chandra Pal, Bal Ganga Dhar Tilak were busy with their propaganda of various kinds of Extremism, and the disturbed emotions were undoubtedly going deeper into Indian society than the Congress had ever reached.

The committee decided upon at Surat met, and a constitution protecting Congress against Extremists was drafted. At Madras that year the new Congress met, peaceful but weak, united but small. Congress was no longer a meeting-ground of all independent opinions and all Indian policies. Nationalism was defined and limited. A section, hailing chiefly from Bengal, asked that the new rules be submitted to Congress for approval, but it was held that the drafting committee had absolute powers of settlement. That led to further trouble. In 1912 the chiefs of the Congress yielded, the rules were so modified, and a section returned again to the fold. But the Congress remained crippled.

In the meantime new channels had been cut along which Indian agitation might run, and new responsibilities imposed upon Indian politicians. In 1909 the Morley reforms were passed, and the Legislative Councils became Congress platforms. Thus ended the conditions under which the old Congress lived and moved and had its being. The Opposition to the Indian Government was to be found in the seats of the Legislative Councils, and new political conditions arose giving the Congress a new rôle to fill. Of course the transformation did not take place all at once. Indian opinion still required to be voiced by a political organisation, and in these feeble years the Congress was not without its triumphs. It compelled the Government to undo Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal, and it received the homage of imitation from the Mohammedans, who, in 1912, founded the Moslem League. It was an essential platform for Indian nationalism.

Then came the war and the new life. A Home Rule League was started, firmer and more definite in its demands than the Congress had been, and the younger and more vigorous elements of nationalism were attracted to that. But the Congress still remained the Congress, and at Calcutta in 1917 the Home Rule Leaguers and the younger elements forced upon the more conservative elements Mrs. Besant as President. The unity of the Congress was sorely strained, but it held for the meeting and a month or two later. Then upon the question of the attitude to the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, it broke.

This was inevitable. The new conditions of Indian politics and the growth of a new generation with changed minds uprooted old trees under the shades of which the older men had rested. The old Congress leaders like Mr. Gokhale, Sir Pherosha Mehta, Mr. Surendranath Bannerjea, have naturally passed into the ranks of statesmen. For them the mills of reform were grinding steadily. The others had no such reverence and no such faith. Congress had taught India to think and act politically; the Morley reforms had obliterated the great non-political distinction between Mohammedan and Hindu but had made a breach in Indian public opinion between progressive and moderate. This is not a calamity such as the Surat split was. It is the natural evolution of things, and if it marks the end of the Congress as we knew it, that will not be regretted when it is seen that the Congress did not end thus until the political conditions of India into which it fitted had already ended.

The Indian Government ought to see that it is now faced with Indian opinion, and should begin its new task by throwing away all useless defences. It should change its angle of vision, for the nature of its work has changed. It is no longer that of a government of civil servants, but of statesmen; its problems are no longer office and administrative problems, but political and legislative ones; it can no longer

be a committee of Civil Service heads of departments, it must be a Cabinet. And the change has come from without owing to the growth in Indian merit and self-confidence, owing to the strengthening of Indian opinion. Whilst we sat in our chairs of office, the halls and courtyards became full of people animated by a new will. The relation of our imperialist power to their obedience had been revolutionised. Our power now knows its weakness, their will its strength, and we need no writing on the wall to tell us that such things belong to the nature of freedom, and their fulfilment should be the pride of the nation that has done its work so well. They close ancient chapters, but do not end histories; they change relationships, but not allegiance.

We must not make the mistake of meeting the demand for more legislative authority in the same dilatory, niggardly, and grudging way as we met the demand for more administrative places for Indians. On that road lies ruin or, at best, baffling entanglement.

One of the pleas hitherto liberally employed by the Government has been that educated political India did not represent the India of the masses and that the European administrator entered more sympathetically into the needs of the people than the Indian who had been to Oxford, who was a lawyer, a journalist, a Bombay manufacturer, or a Bengal zemindar. The point was not without its force had it been used reasonably, had it not been employed as an excuse for Government maintaining its fortified citadels against the movements of Indian public opinion. There is not much in it now. The citadels which it defended have all but been forced, and yet, in view of the immediate future, both because of the controversy that still remains and of the settlement which has yet to come, the point cannot be dismissed without a passing examination.

Who compose the Congress? This is the answer given by a Frenchman who voices the opinion of an influential section of officials (much smaller now, however, than when he wrote



his book): "This so-called National Party is really a party of privilege, a concourse of the representatives of the high castes and the rich classes, which is really a stranger to the nation on whose behalf it professes to speak. . . . The little group of ambitious members of the upper classes."<sup>1</sup> This description is neither enlightened nor just, though it has a superficial truth about it. Any one professing to be a student of political conditions must know that such a description could have been aptly applied to the earlier stages of every Liberal movement. M. Chailley sneers at the only proof that could ever be given that India is awake politically. In the nature of things, political agitation could be begun only by the educated; when it was undertaken by the masses it was the Mutiny; and the educated were bound to be the professional classes—either having come from these classes or having moved into them. In the sense of having amongst its delegates all castes, all grades, and all industrial classes, the Congress is not representative; but the Congress is not the last but the first word in how to make Indian public opinion politically effective. In time, the bodies representing Indian opinion will be able to submit to more thorough tests than the Congress—and then the description applied to them will probably be: "a little group of ambitious members of the lower classes." The true representative is not one who belongs to his constituency or who has personal interests similar to those of his constituency, but who understands it and sympathises with it. That is the claim which the bureaucracy makes for itself, and it is open to Congress, though composed of "the high castes and the rich classes," to make it on its own behalf, and do its best to justify it.

Self-government is demanded first of all by those in strong social or economic positions. It was so in Great Britain, where the Liberal movement was middle class, rich and professional. The working classes come in later with their new causes of difference and tests of representation. The Indian movement

<sup>1</sup> *Administrative Problems of British India*, by Joseph Chailley, pp. 164-5.

is still in the first stage, and if the Congress satisfies that, it justifies itself. The lack of education and of self-confidence—mainly owing to caste—amongst the masses will make the transition from the first stage to the second in India far more difficult than it was here, but that does not excuse us for quarrelling with the first stage itself, or for refusing to see that that and that only could be the characteristics of the commencement of the conflict.

The economic resolutions of the Congress do reflect the interests of the middle class and those in economically strong positions. For instance, if its views on land taxation and ownership had been carried out, the ultimate effect would not have been to benefit the cultivator, but to increase the amount of Indian rent enjoyed by private people and the ease with which creditors could seize the land of the agriculturists. Its commercial views have been generally those of manufacturers, and working-class needs have rarely absorbed the thoughts of these Christmas gatherings. We have to remember, however, that the Congress has been a Nationalist movement as well as a Liberal one, and when Nationalist issues are at stake, as history so abundantly shows, all other political considerations are in the background.

Congress, however, like our own middle-class Liberal movement, has been behind every attempt made to educate the people, and it has opposed the Salt Tax and drawn attention to the impoverishing effects of certain other forms of taxation. This also is a characteristic of parties in the Liberal stage of a country's evolution. Liberty has not received at their hands an ample programme, oppression has not been discovered in the many places where it has its authority; but homage is paid to the one and war declared on the other. Therefore we can let things take their course. Speaking generally, Congress opinion is to find its way first of all into authority in India. It will create reactions, as all political movements in authority do, as indeed is seen in the Congress itself; it will look at India perhaps too much from its own

point of view and in the light of its own interests. What party in power in India or anywhere else does not? The cure for that is not to keep an adult India in tutelage, but to hasten on a more general awakening and to form a more representative Indian opinion and will.

It must be observed that the more recent radical movements in Indian Nationalism—that headed by Mr. Tilak, for instance—have gone deeper down into the strata of Indian society than the old Congress movement did, and the villages are now being stirred by Nationalist propaganda. In this respect, again, the Indian movement is following the lines of our own Liberal, Radical, and Labour evolution.

A Nationalist movement, however, can never find full expression in a political party, because its liberty relates to the mind and not merely to the law. It must return to historical traditions; it must give out its soul in happiness and devotion; it must speak as its nation has spoken and dance as its kindred have danced. In Ireland we have in recent years witnessed the revival of a Nationalist language, a Nationalist literature, a Nationalist stage, a Nationalist economic policy, and as these—the true tests of nationality—have been developing, they have carried with them an impatient condemnation of a political movement inspired by the expediencies of Parliament and reduced to compromise and manipulation for success. India shows similar growths, and if the National Congress is somewhat neglected and looks like a plant losing its sap, that is partly because the political side of Nationalism must always be somewhat hard and its political policy hampered, circumscribed and uninspiring, whereas the more spiritual life of a national renaissance is of exalted and unlimited vision, is free, buoyant and creative, using the medium of art for interpretation and the subtleties of imagination for propaganda. The political leader, however free he may imagine himself to be, is bound to the thing he would destroy; he who sings songs, tells tales,



puts dramas on the stage, lives in a world of liberty and is apt to despise the bondsmen. Nationalism, however, needs both.

I shall deal later on with the religious movements of Nationalism. They may be regarded as conservative, as reactions away from enlightenment, as galvanisings of dead bodies into a false appearance of life.<sup>1</sup> That may be the attitude of the critical observer; that is not how it strikes the devout Nationalist. And if we judge the matter impartially as a historical phenomenon, we shall not be content with regarding it as a movement in itself, and apart by itself, but shall consider it as an incident in a process. If India is to go forward as India, it must go back first of all to get in touch with the broken Indian tradition. However we may regard this as moralists, as students of historical processes, it should cause us neither surprise nor regret. It is the spirit of progress swerving to find refreshment, a base for a start, and an open road. The revival of the historical consciousness of India involves not merely a new historical school at the Universities, but a religious reaction which will, however, soon disentangle itself and in the end lead to the purification of Hinduism.

This reaction in religion has been accompanied by a return in art and literature to Indian inspiration. The revival of Persian, Mogul and Hindu art, though in inferior hands it is copying, in others, like the Tagores and Gangulis, it is a spirit and a genius. In the Tagore school of art one finds not only the style and subjects, but the feeling of the noon-day of Indian painting, and one has only to walk from a "Royal Academy" annual exhibition in Calcutta to that of the India Society to understand what is going on. The West, which used to dominate the East, still empties its

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the attempt to make the mythology of the Vedas symbolical of modern knowledge, soma, the food of the gods, has been identified with petroleum, and we have been told that in order to understand the Soma Pavamana hymns properly, we must know about "the oil fountains of Baku."

paint-tubes on to its paper and canvas, and strives in vain to capture that reposeful mastery which is like a presiding presence in all great art; the other in a totally different world of thought and inspiration puts the pleasures and the attractions of its soul into form and colour, and fills its exhibitions not merely with frames and paintings, but with an atmosphere and a life. You have moved from one world to another, from Camden Town to Udaipur, in the space of a few hundred yards and in a few minutes of time in going from one exhibition to the other. And yet, let me note in passing, so great is the divorce between our Government and the Nationalists of India that when the former proposed to dispose of some of the Western daubs shown at the Calcutta School of Art to make room for true Indian work, the latter cried out that it was a dark plot to keep them ignorant. When the Government proposes to do good it is suspected of bad motives.

The same contrast is felt as regards the stage, although here the Indian has not produced genius. And yet, in spite of crudities in acting generally amounting to terrible amateurishness, the difference between an English and an Indian play is striking. I have seen both done by the same company and during the same entertainment. The Abbey Theatre of Dublin has roused keen interest amongst those Indians interested in the drama—and the drama has always played an important part in Indian life—and the Indian follower of Kalidasa and Krishna Miora returns to his own life for his subjects, stimulated by Sinn Fein. Dramatic societies are legion, and the programme of one before me whilst I write, announcing the production in the Punjab of a play by Lady Gregory along with two original plays of Indian life, is typical of many. I am sure they played Lady Gregory very badly, and to do homage to her did violence to themselves, and I am equally sure they played their own work with more success.

The fame of Rabindranath Tagore relieves me of the

necessity to do much more than remind my readers of what they know regarding him. To the revival of Indian culture in all its activities Rabindranath has imparted the chief stimulus. Music, poetry, fiction, politics, have been enriched by his many-sided activities, and he is India without a spot or blemish. He has assimilated the West, but has at the same time transmuted it so that it is no longer West. There have been Indian poets before Tagore who struck a note of great distinction, like Toru and the other Dutts, but whilst their subjects may have been Indian, their demeanour and song were not. This one simple expression from the *Gardener* proclaims the culture to which it belongs, and transports one to India, its thought, its emotion, its method of worship. The imagery must recall to any one who has it stored in his memory the whole Indian scene :

“How can the body touch the flower which only the spirit may touch?”

No mind of purely Western culture can ever fathom that sentence to its uttermost depth, or create from it the vision which the poet had when he wrote it. Bankim Chandra Chatterji was a great novelist debased under the influence of the West, and doomed in his later work to traverse a world of fantastic romance and tinsel-decked heroes and heroines. Still he wrote the banned song, *Bande Mataram*. Tagore returns to where Chatterji went astray, and *Bande Mataram* is in every line of his stories.

I might embody this movement of the Indian spirit and intelligence in a list of distinguished names which, in addition to the four Tagores in philosophy, art and letters, would include Arabinda Ghosh as a religious teacher, Sir R. N. Mukerji and Sir Ratan Tata in industry, Dr. Ray and Dr. Bose in science, Munshi Ram and Principal Rudra in education, Mr. Gokhale in politics, Mr. Gandhi as a power over men. In law and journalism the names are too embarrassing in number and distinction for selection. In short, in all those activities which give distinction to a nation, and which

express vitality, Indians are engaged and are doing work of importance.

Thus Indian Nationalism proves its claim to be a national renaissance, and gives a plain warning that it is much more than the agitation of political coteries. It is the revival of an historical tradition, the liberation of the soul of a people.



## CHAPTER I

### THE CONQUEST

IN an opening page of his book on India, Sir John Strachey wrote: "This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India—that there is not and never was an India possessing according to European ideas any sort of unity, physical, social, political, or religious; no Indian nation, no 'people of India' of which we hear so much."<sup>1</sup> In one sense the warning is true, but I would say that "the first and most essential thing to learn about India" is that the statement is very misleading, especially if used for political purposes.

India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the Bay of Bengal to Bombay, is naturally the area of a single government. One has only to look at the map to see how geography has fore-ordained an Indian Empire. Its vastness does not obscure its oneness; its variety, its unity. The Himalayas and their continuing barriers frame the great peninsula off from the rest of Asia. Its long rivers, connecting its extremities and its interior with the sea, knit it together for communication and transport purposes; its varied productions, interchangeable with each other, make it a convenient industrial unit, maintaining contact with the world through the great ports to the East and to the West. Political and religious tradition has also welded it into one Indian consciousness. Even those masses who are not aware of this, offer up prayers which proclaim it and go on pilgrimages which assume it.

This spiritual unity dates from very early times in Indian

<sup>1</sup> *India: its Administration and Progress*, p. 5.

culture. An historical atlas of India shows how again and again the natural unity of India influenced conquest and showed itself in empires. The realms of Chandragupta and his grandson Asoka (305-232 B.C.) embraced practically the whole of the peninsula, and ever after, amidst the swaying and falling of dynasties, this unity was the dream of every victor and struggled into being and never lost its potency. The Pathans sought it, but it shrank in their grasp; the Moghuls pursued it, but it fled from their hands. The arm which stretched from the throne to the utmost limit of the dominions was enfeebled by its length. Military conquest could not consolidate. Then the British came, and the inevitability of a united India defied their modest proclamations and led them from province to province until they reached the seas and the mountains.<sup>1</sup> In this respect a study of the historical maps of India resembles a study of fate, or of the attack of a mighty natural force like the sea upon something which, resisting sullenly, is doomed to subjection by stages. Any empire in India smaller than the whole peninsula is unstable and must extend.

When Elizabeth was on the throne in 1600, the English invaders came, as chartered traders, to barter and make profits. Empire had never entered their heads. Even trade settlements had never occurred to them. They were to be partners in the profits of voyages. But they had embarked upon a venture which, like an open road, led to greater ventures, and there was no stopping-place on the journey. The project expanded, and at last they asked for powers to establish and conduct a permanent trade with India. In due time they established factories where Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta now stand, but they found both French and Portuguese merchants there before them, and rivalry could not be confined to the bazaar and the counting-house. Under

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, when assuming the sovereignty of what were the Company's territories, this was said: "We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions."

Indian conditions trade and politics could not be kept apart. Political designs were thrust upon the traders. Their trade competition became the concern of their Governments. The warehouse was a political outpost; the merchants had to become courtiers; the business reports had to assume the likeness of a State paper. The trading history of the Company is a history of Court manipulation and influence conducted by a remarkable progression of men—bold, stubborn, self-assertive, acquisitive—men who could face danger and trouble, who were not cowed by native rulers and not discouraged by towering adversity—men who believed in the might of their country and their own call to exploit and rule without being too particular as to methods and tools. In due course, the political powers which they manipulated became transferred to themselves. The clerk became the tax-gatherer and the soldier, and the Company became a sovereign authority and passed under the fateful law that whoever governs India must govern it all.

The characteristic feature of this conquest was that the Company did not enter upon it until it had secured an economic grip upon the country. As alien as Alexander's army, it did not impose political authority until it had acquired economic authority. It insinuated itself into Indian life before it seized Indian government. Its first concern was nothing more than to secure "a free trade, a peaceable residence, and a very good esteem" with the native rulers.<sup>1</sup> From that everything else followed.

As the red patches advanced over the map of India, sections pulled themselves together to resist, but no power then existing could develop that Indian cohesion which was necessary if the new trading invader was to be hurled back. We were not accepted, but we could not be resisted. India challenged, but could not make her challenge good. It was a new method of conquest. Unlike previous conquerors, we did not come

<sup>1</sup> Chaplain Terry's description of what Sir Thomas Roe accomplished at the Moghul Court before he left for England in 1619.



in through a narrow neck of land so that our force was spent before it filled the peninsula ; we came from the sea. We spread over the south from Madras, over the west from Bombay, over the east from Calcutta, and the united forces flowed into the narrowing plains of the north-west. Moreover, we were not a military conquering power imposing tribute and hastening hither and thither in our conquests. The stability of trade was always in our minds.<sup>1</sup> The invasion was not of hordes of men seeking new settlements, nor of military captains seeking spoil, but of capital seeking investment, of merchants seeking profit. It was necessarily slow ; it divided to rule, and enlisted Indians to subdue India. It assimilated as it went. It presents to the student of history an interesting contrast in the methods and efficiency of conquest by economic penetration compared with conquest by military victory, though the former always merged into the latter in the end.

Representations had to be made to Courts and interests secured there. At first the traders acted behind their Government and used Government Ambassadors like Sir Thomas Roe to promote their interests. But that became unsatisfactory. Something more direct was required. India was falling to pieces. Rebellion and anarchy were spreading. The Moghul Empire was hastening to its end in Aurangzib. Since 1626 the Company had enjoyed territorial political privileges at its fort at Armagon, and with foreign rivals on one hand and a disrupted Indian sovereignty on the other, it had either to protect itself by controlling in some measure

<sup>1</sup> In dispatches sent to the Company the following explanation is offered of the welcome given to the traders by the ruler of Madras : " First, he desires his Country may flourish and grow rich—which he Conceives it will by Drawinge Merchants to him. Secondly, hee desires for his money good Horses from Persia. Thirdly, that yearly upon our Shippes hee may send a servant into the Bay Bengalla to buy him Hawks, Apes, Parratts and such-like bables. . . . And lastly, the fort, being made substantial and strong, may bee able to defend his person on occasion against his insultinge Neighbours " (Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, i. p. 20).



territorial sovereignty or to give up its struggle for life. The latter it had no intention of doing. By 1686 its mind was made up on that, and next year it declared its intention to "establish such a polity of civil and military power, and create and secure such a large revenue . . . as may be the foundation of a large, well-grounded, sure English dominion in India for all time to come." It is not my task to trace the fortunes of the Company itself. Were it so I should have to use these mighty words as an introduction to failure in India and strife at home, and to a period when the Company had to return to the peaceful commerce and the dependence upon the Ambassadors of the Home Government which this declaration threw on one side. That, however, was but for a time. Indian conditions forced a policy of political activity upon the Company, and the conquest proceeded. Some rulers had to be supported, some opposed, the responsibilities of others had to be assumed. In every case the end was the same—conquest and empire.

The struggle between Portuguese, Dutch, Prussian, French, and English traders in India throbbed to every European quarrel, and at length, when the French war of 1744 broke out, the last act in this section of the drama was staged, and when it ended sixteen years later, the Company was in possession and again proceeded to evolve its conquests and extensions.

All our rivals had failed. The most brilliant, the French, formidable in war, were less formidable in trade and diplomacy, and less doggedly supported by Paris than the Company was by London. France started the policy of interfering in Indian politics in order to found a French Empire in India, but Clive happened to have been born; our economic resources were greater and so was our sea-power. We were steadier in pursuing the policy of dominion arising out of trade, and, when the time came to make the critical transformation, we were even better prepared for it in temperament and resources than were the French. The Portuguese were soldiers and priests rather than traders, and their pro-

gramme of conquest was from the beginning as impossible as Alexander's was. The Dutch pursued a trade policy of monopoly which required for its support a military and naval backing which the Netherlands could not afford. Other rivals were of little consequence. So in the end we remained the sole power in India owing to our economic stability, the character of our traders and captains, our fleet, and we were left to face our Indian responsibilities and fulfil the law of Indian conquest. Now it was the Mahratta, now the Sikh, now the Burmese rule that shrivelled and disappeared at our approach, and the unification of India proceeded apace. In due time the merchant had done his work, and in the course of it he had transformed himself into a governor. Then he was supplanted by the Crown.

The expansion of the British Empire in India was like in-flowing water filling the bed of a lake. Whilst there is anarchy in India, the diversity in tongue and people may mean diversity in the State, and Sir John Strachey's warning may be of political importance; but when that anarchy gives place to order, the boundary of the Indian sovereignty is the sea and the mountains—indeed, Indian law and order depend upon that being the boundary. The sects may be legion, the tongues innumerable, the customs varied and antagonistic, but he who is most aware of these diversities and who gives them a most important place in the peculiar complexity of the Indian problem, is also aware that moulding them together into a unity and imposing some kind of coherence upon them is the only policy which fulfils India's destiny.

Hence it is that whoever would study Indian problems with any profit must begin with a recognition of two apparently contradictory facts: India is divided; India is united. The latter is the predominating creative factor in Indian politics. It may be that the central Government should be a federation of States and provinces, each enjoying wide privileges of self-government. That is a matter of machinery and political convenience. All I am concerned with here is to

point out, at the very threshold of this study, that the predominating tendencies in Indian life are not diverse rites and tongues, but the unification of all into one sovereignty. That is the great influence that has made the history of the British occupation, and that now presents it with its greatest problem.

It is true that the economic origin of our settlement in India has meant that we have used our political powers there for economic purposes. Nothing more conclusive has been written on that than the criticism passed on the Company by Adam Smith. "As sovereigns, their interest is exactly the same with that of the country which they govern. As merchants, their interest is exactly opposite to that interest." That criticism, somewhat altered in its literary form, but untouched in its substance, always holds good of foreign States governing peoples as we govern India—but that in passing. It may be true, as some say, that economic considerations rule political policy. But in the government of subject peoples by sovereign States, economic considerations influence both sides and create political movements amongst the subject as well as amongst the ruling peoples. Moreover, a subject people that is being educated and that is breathing the air of liberty will be purchased by no economic price and will sacrifice advantage in order to enjoy self-government. Thus neither the sovereign nor the subject nations can avoid the troubles and the problems of political liberty, which must always be both the judge and the goal of all policy.

As I have indicated, at a very early time the British nation regarded the transactions of the merchants in India as being something more than trading affairs. We felt we were undertaking political responsibilities, and consequently the long-drawn-out history of the relations of the Company and the Government tells the story of how the nation's sense of its obligations to India overshadowed the original purpose of the Company, and political intentions and ideas supplanted



those of trade. We regarded the people as wards, and we governed as trustees. The Indian political problem has not been one of how to keep a subject people in subjection, but of how to lead a broken people into greater liberty. That, at any rate, has been the professed intention of the governors for generations. When the Mutiny broke out and challenged our occupation, so firmly had that policy been established that, despite the passions raised by some of its events and the ruthless hand by which it was suppressed, the nation did not change its purpose.

Because that was our policy we could boast that our army of occupation was comparatively insignificant in its numbers, and that the military had little or no influence on the government of the country. India has not been kept by the sword, but by the law; not by fear, but by trust in Parliament. Until but yesterday, when the foreign plant of anarchism took feeble root in it, force has not challenged us since the Mutiny, and Indian movements for a greater freedom have been purely political. The statesman alone has ruled. His problems (which he has faced with the uncertain vision which is all that honest men can claim as a guide, and with the mingled success and disappointment, consistency and inconsistency, which alone are possible in this world) have been those of how to ascertain public opinion, to develop the country, to make the people content, and to lead them to freedom. It has been the problem of a people ruled by another people in whose political philosophy a subject nation is regarded as a blot, but which has been compelled by its history to accept such a subject nation as an inheritance. Our political task in India has been akin to the biological process of transmutation. At no time has the ideally perfect been possible, so that at no time could we be absolutely consistent. We have had to swerve now and again. The pressure of circumstances has occasionally driven our representatives from the principles which, through the generations, we believed we were carrying out, and they have sometimes met with regret and opposition



the evidences of India's awakening ; but these uncertainties have been but incidents on the way. As the trading station inevitably became the political capital, so, with equal inevitability, unless the British political genius is to change fundamentally for the worse, the British conquest is to issue in Indian liberty and self-government.

## CHAPTER II

### PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE

#### I—PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL

THE powers under which the Company worked not only allowed it to trade without rivals, but to fortify its settlements, maintain both land and sea forces, fight for its rights and establish courts. Thus it proceeded not only to do business but to acquire territory, and by the end of the seventeenth century its political aspect was so important to it that in one of its resolutions<sup>1</sup> it draws attention to the fact that the Dutch Companies of a similar nature "write ten paragraphs concerning their government, their civil and military policy, warfare, and the increase of their revenue, for one paragraph they write concerning trade," and suggests that the London Company should apportion its attentions accordingly. It also states that the increase of its political revenue had become as much its concern as the increase of its trade, and refers to its task of "making us a nation in India." In this respect, as in many others, Cromwell showed the prevision of a great Imperial statesman and asked that "a national interest" should be taken in India. As early as his time it was seen that the Company was in reality a political body, and that its existence was involving the whole nation in responsibility.

The Revolution of 1688 swept away the right of the Crown to grant these trading monopolies, and when the Company, putting its Charter privilege into force, detained a ship in the

<sup>1</sup> 1688.

Thames because it suspected that the cargo was to be used to compete with its East India trade, Parliament stepped in and declared against charters issued by the Crown giving exclusive trading rights. There end and begin clearly marked stages in the history of our conquest of India. At this point the Company became a thing of Parliament and not of the Crown, and subsequently, in renewing and amending its charters, Parliament interfered more and more with the conduct of the Company's business. For the next century and a half the history of the Company is one of territorial expansion in India with a progressive contraction of its independent governing authority and a growing control by Parliament.

At first, Parliament was in the position of an uncomfortable spectator seeing its recalcitrant and pushful subjects committing it to obligations against its will whilst it was powerless to call a halt. "Forasmuch," said the Act of 1784, renewing the Charter and voicing the long-held unhappy feelings of the Government, "as to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India are measures repugnant to the wish, the honour, and the policy of this nation, it shall not be lawful for the Governor-General in Council to declare war . . . without express command and authority" from the Home Government. Parliament declared its authority, but was in no position to enforce it.

In 1765 Clive returned to India to complete the task which he had begun eight years before when he fought the battle of Plassey, and created a condition of affairs which in a few years led to the Company becoming possessed of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa—another landmark in the Conquest. The history of the years was a strange mingling of great honour and dishonour, when every quality which is the pride of an Englishman has to be told of side by side with deeds that are a disgrace to him. Within two years Clive was back in England, having put the East India Company in possession of the revenues of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and having taken

the first step which finally transformed the trading Company into an Imperial authority. However proud the country was of Clive's wonderful achievements, and however generous it desired to be in judging his conduct, there were faults in him and his work which it could not overlook, which it could not excuse, and which, if it had allowed to continue, would have amounted to gross national neglect.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the affairs of the Company were in a bad way, and when it was about to take charge of Bengal it was bankrupt, and had to appeal in 1773 to Parliament for a loan of £1,400,000. It was too soon for the nation to make itself directly responsible for the government of the territories which had fallen under the control of the Company, but it was not too soon for it to begin imposing such conditions upon the Company as would confine it in its transactions to ways approved by the national sentiment.

It had, however, become evident that Parliament sooner or later would have to supersede the Company. Lord Chatham, in 1767, said: "No subjects could acquire the sovereignty of any territory for themselves, but only for the nation to which they belonged." But that was not to be the first stage. Discussions in Parliament took place upon what the Company and its officers had done—the Company had been slightly interfered with, as in 1767—and Select Committees enquired into its ways. In 1773 the East India Company Act—now known as the "Regulating Act"—was passed<sup>2</sup> "for the better management of the said united Company's affairs in India." It decreed the appointment of a Governor-General with a Council of four in Bengal; it gave the Governor-General in Council a constitutional authority and placed him supreme over the other Presidencies; in particular it made

<sup>1</sup> For instance, the Select Committee appointed by the House of Commons in 1773 reported that between the beginning of 1757 and the end of 1766 the princes and other magnates of Bengal had distributed £5,940,987 amongst the servants of the Company.

<sup>2</sup> Whoever wishes to follow the legislation relating to the administration of India must consult Sir Courtenay Ilbert's *The Government of India*.



him the authority who alone could declare war ; it imposed upon the Governor-General the duty of keeping in close touch with the Court of Directors at home and taking orders from them ; it provided for the establishment of a Supreme Court appointed by the Crown ; it forbade the taking of bribes or presents by the Governor-General, the members of his Council, or the Judges ; it enacted that all rules and ordinances promulgated by the Governor-General in Council were to be sent to a Secretary of State at home, who, in the name of the Crown, could communicate disapproval to the Court of Directors, when the rule or ordinance objected to became null and void ; and it provided for indictments against the Governor-General, the Judges, and the chief officials being laid and tried before the King's Bench in England.

This marks another departure. The political State was taking charge of the politics of the trading Company. That was the first step towards the Chatham ideal. It was an attempt to divide trade from politics, to secure the administration of justice, and to create a watchful eye with which to examine the Company's proceedings.

In 1784 a further step was taken. The previous Act had led to considerable difficulties. Party feeling at home ran high and India was thrown into the whirlpool of home political rivalries. Warren Hastings was not an easy man to control, and when he had to please both his Court of Directors and the Ministry, when he had to work with a Council the majority of which opposed him, and face conflicts between his Council and the Supreme Court of Calcutta, his task was no enviable one and his stiffness of neck was not made more flexible. He was never out of quarrels in Calcutta and criticisms at home. Parliament continued to enquire and to be indignant. It kept on protesting that it was not willing that the Company's directors should govern Indian States, but it was not prepared to take the job on itself. It made up its mind to lay a guiding hand as well as keep a watchful eye upon Indian administration, and so it adopted the inevitable blundering

compromise of creating a special Board of Control for which a Minister was to be responsible to Parliament. The Company nominally ruled, but Ministers controlled. The Board was to "superintend, direct, and control" the political work of the Company. It could write or alter despatches and compel the Company to accept its decisions. The Regulating Act imposed rules; this made an attempt to see that they were steadily carried out. India was put under dual control, and to this day we have not been able to rid ourselves completely of this system.

Meanwhile the tide of annexation and conquest flowed on. Wellesley, continuing and concluding Clive's work, was responsible for making the drift into a conscious purpose of dominion and "turned the East India Company, in spite of itself, from a trading corporation into an imperial power."<sup>1</sup> And during all this time the Company got into deeper and deeper water. The forward policy of Lord Wellesley imposed heavy financial and political burdens upon it. The part of its work which belonged to the nation increased, that which was its own dwindled. The House of Commons appointed its usual committees of enquiry preparatory to renewing the Charter in 1813. In the end, the Company's monopoly of trade, except as regards tea, was taken from it. It was becoming more and more evident that this trading company on the one hand had to become a governing authority, and on the other was of no use as such. After the usual interval of twenty years, the Government of India Act, 1833, was passed—another conspicuous landmark in this period of transition. Truly did Palmerston say that the Company had then become "a phantom of its original body."<sup>2</sup> In its preamble the Act declared that "the United Company of Merchants in England trading to the East Indies" were willing to put their authority and property at the disposal of Parliament. The Company's Charter was to be renewed

<sup>1</sup> *Lord Wellesley : Rulers of India* (p. 206).

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, February 12th, 1858.

until 1854, and meantime it was to hold its property in trust for the Crown and use it for the governing of India. All trading monopoly was taken away, and the Company was deprived of its commercial liberties. The Board of Commissioners was to have absolute control of these governmental properties and rights, and all letters and documents from the Directors on Indian policy were to be submitted to it. By this time only the dismissal of certain servants and the Home establishment remained outside the control of the Board. The Act also provided in very specific terms that colour or race or religion should be no bar to the employment of Indians in Government service. This Act was the beginning of the end, the signal that the curtain was to drop and close for ever that wonderful scene where masterful men venturing after profits founded an Empire. The signal was repeated in 1853, and the emphatic declaration made that the administration of India was "too national a concern to be left to the chances of benevolent despotism."

But before the curtain actually did drop, a wild act of tragedy had to be gone through. India resented an intrusion. She was broken and powerless, but she made one frantic effort to throw us off. When Dalhousie arrived in Calcutta, his predecessor bade him farewell with the assurance that no gun need be fired in India for seven years. "The peace of the country rests on the firmest and most permanent basis," wrote the *Friend of India* that January (1848). In three months the Punjab was in arms. The policy of Lord Wellesley to protect the princes of decaying States was ripening into its inevitable harvest of annexation, for protection could not be separated from responsibility. The Wellesley policy of protection was the mother of the Dalhousie policy of annexation. And so this administration which opened so calmly became one of the most tempestuously difficult, and led up to the supreme challenge of the Mutiny. No Company could survive that. British rule in India had to be British rule and become part and parcel of British responsibility



shouldered by British sovereignty without any intermediary. The process of the assimilation of the Company by Parliament was complete. The Company ended and the Crown took its place—and the monarch being constitutional, the Crown meant Parliament.

The intention of Parliament at the time is evident, and appears in the debates on the Bills of 1858. Lord Palmerston, introducing the first Bill of that year, stated that the time had come to place “the executive functions of the government of India at home . . . under the direct authority of the Crown, to be governed in the name of the Crown by the responsible ministers of the Crown, sitting in Parliament and responsible to Parliament and the public.”<sup>1</sup> Over the Council, its President, being a member of the Cabinet, was to be the final authority. He maintained that what improvement had been made in India in late years “has been entirely the result of debates in this and the other House of Parliament.”<sup>2</sup> The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir G. C. Lewis, said: “I wish to see the responsibility for Indian administration concentrated within a narrow sphere; I wish to see that responsibility under the clear control of this House.”<sup>3</sup> On the third and final Bill, Lord John Russell said: “We give to a Secretary of State for India the power of directing and controlling the affairs of that portion of the Empire.”<sup>4</sup>

I regret that it must be admitted that Parliament has not been a just and watchful steward. It holds no great debates on Indian questions; it looks after its own responsibilities with far less care than it looked after those of the Company; its seats are empty when it has its annual saunter through the Indian Budget, and even this homage of formal politeness to India was neglected during the war; it is aware of India only when it is troubled by cotton duties, or when something else arises which makes their constituencies remind members that India is a British possession. And yet surely

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, February 12th, 1858, p. 1282.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 1348-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 1291.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* July 8th, 1858, p. 1092.



there is some pathos in the undoubted fact that India is kept not by force, not by the excellence of its Civil Service, but by its trust in the British Parliament.

## II—THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The question of what is the real part played in the Government of India by the Secretary of State is difficult to answer. As a member of his political Party, he has a bias in certain directions. He makes frontier wars alluring or reforms interesting according to the known predilections of his political creed. He imposes a fiscal policy also in accord with the views of the Home Cabinet and the interests it has to serve. He and his Council with the Viceroy and his Council are undoubtedly together an Indian Executive, but in normal times I think the truth is that the Secretary is quiescent except for office work, and that the Indian part of the Executive is the active part, except in so far as Indian affairs are aspects of Home interests. India is really governed by the Civil Service of India, whatever the constitutional facts may be. The voluminous correspondence with Lord Minto which Lord Morley has published in his *Recollections* shows a Secretary with a policy gently but firmly piloting it along narrow rock-bound channels; but in that case, as indeed in regard to the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals as well, the start is made by agreement in both Whitehall and Simla that something must be done, and the rest is the story of a bargain. The more that self-Government is developed in India, the less will the Secretary of State count. He is generally distrusted by the bureaucracy because he represents Parliament and a little of democracy, and for a short time after his appointment he is an object of curiosity to Indians. When he has a will and ideas, he has power and can exercise it. His constitutional position is therefore less important for practical purposes than his personality.

Still, there can be no question about the supremacy of Parliament and none about the responsibility of the Secretary

of State. And yet the Secretary is in a position constitutionally different from any other Secretary of State. His salary is not paid from British revenues, and he has to act with a Council. Both of these peculiarities are survivals from Company rule, the one reminding us that the Company paid for the Indian government and India House out of Indian revenue, and the other that Parliament's power was once limited to checking Indian administration. A habit has more influence upon an Englishman than a reason.

The Secretary of State's salary is paid from Indian revenues,<sup>1</sup> and his policy consequently cannot be reviewed in the House of Commons, as is the case when Supply for other Departments is being discussed. This is why reformers every year, in connection with the Indian Budget debate, used to discuss a resolution to put the Secretary of State's salary upon the estimates and pay it from Home resources. The effect of this change would be formally to announce the control of Parliament over Indian affairs. That he is in fact fully responsible to Parliament is nevertheless true, as was shown by Mr. Austen Chamberlain's resignation in consequence of the exposure of the scandal connected with the lack of supply of medical stores to the army operating in Mesopotamia in 1915-16. This limitation of Parliamentary control, though it would be convenient if it were removed, is of no substantial importance, as, in spite of it, Parliament can question the Secretary and can exercise control over him, whenever it comes to discuss his conduct, by one of the several ways provided, in addition to voting his salary.

The other limitation is more serious, and provides the Secretary with a double allegiance and responsibility which not only makes him less than the servant of Parliament, but enables him to shield himself from Parliamentary criticism and puts him in a position which tends to weaken Parliamentary control.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Government of India Act*, c. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Writing to Lord Minto after the long discussions on the Reform Scheme

The original of the Secretary of State's Council was the Board of Control created by the Act of 1784. Our Colonies, being, from their origin, constitutionally possessions of the Crown, came to be governed (apart from the realities of Parliamentary control, and subsequently of their own constitutions) by the King in Council—that is, the Privy Council ; whereas our Empire in India, being the creation of a trading Company which at an early stage Parliament held to be responsible to it, came to be governed not by the King in Council, but by a Secretary of State in Council, and thus historical forms were preserved and the Board of Control idea survived in a new body adapted to the new constitution. It is too often a characteristic of our methods of government that we continue to work with old machinery after it has ceased to have any meaning, or when the effect of its working has been altered. It seems to be a safeguard against revolutionary change. In reality it is a survival of the useless, and leads to inefficiency, if not to greater evil.

The Board, which at first consisted of not more than six Privy Councillors, of whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer and a Secretary of State had to be two, was modified in its composition from time to time. Since 1811 the President of the Board had been a member of the Cabinet, and when Parliament supplanted the Company, the Act of 1858 retained the Board, called it a Council, and fixed its membership at fifteen. Ten members required as a qualification that they had served or resided in India at least ten years, and had not left India for more than ten years. The membership is now fourteen, and ten of the members must have been in India for ten years and have left it for not longer than five

were over, Lord Morley remarks with reference to the powers which agreements between Councils in Simla and Whitehall give : “ When Whitehall and Simla come to an agreement, the matter is practically over, whereas a Cabinet has to fight its Bill through the two Houses ” (*Recollections*, ii. p. 322). Thus the settlement of great Indian affairs now takes place outside Parliament, which, assuming the superior knowledge of the expert Councils generally, agrees to their agreement.



years. They are appointed by the Secretary of State, and hold office for seven years, but may be reappointed for another five, in which case a memorandum justifying the reappointment must be laid before both Houses of Parliament.<sup>1</sup> Members may be removed from office by the Crown on an address from both Houses. No member of the Council may be a Member of Parliament. Lord Morley wished to appoint Lord Cromer, but could not because he was a Member of the House of Lords.<sup>2</sup> The salary attached to the office is £1,000 per annum. Five members must be present when business is transacted. Meetings must be held at least once a week, and the Secretary of State presides as a rule. For the transaction of business the Council is divided into Committees which concern themselves with different branches of work, but attempts made to departmentalise the work by giving members a portfolio have wisely been frustrated hitherto. Except when secrecy is required, all orders and communications must be submitted to the Council, but the Secretary of State may override the opinion of a majority of the Council except as regards the expenditure of Indian revenues, the disposal of property, and such financial matters. This power is, however, of little use.

It will thus be seen that the Council is not merely an advisory body. It has authority. It has not only to be consulted, it has to agree. The awkwardness of the situation which would be created if the Secretary forced his desires in the teeth of the opposition of his Council, even when he has constitutional authority for doing so, limits his authority in practice more than it is limited by law. On the one hand, there is the Secretary of State, who comes and goes with political majorities in the House of Commons, who consequently is appointed to bring to bear upon the Government of India influences congenial to public opinion and to the political principles of the party which he represents, and who

<sup>1</sup> *Government of India Act*, 1915, s. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections*, ii. 233.



is responsible to the House of Commons for his policy, and to the Cabinet, of which he is a member. On the other hand, his action is limited by a Council which is more of the nature of a body of civil servants, but which has the power in the most essential matters of government to hamper the Secretary of State in doing what he thinks he ought to do.<sup>1</sup> And this Council is non-representative; it acts of its own untrammelled will; it is not directly responsible to Parliament. This constitutional anomaly could not have existed for a generation if Parliament had taken an active interest in Indian affairs.

The intention of Parliament in maintaining the Board of Control was to recognise that the Government of India required special knowledge. When the Company administered, public opinion and political responsibility had to watch it; when Parliament became responsible, expert knowledge had to guide it. Parliament decided that it had to receive information—hence the Annual Report on the Material and Moral Progress of India and the statutory Financial Statements<sup>2</sup>—and it established the custom of an annual debate on the Indian Budget—not always observed, however. But for the details of the administration it did not leave the Secretary for India as it left the Secretary for the Colonies, and so it adopted, as I have explained, the method of dual control.

Obviously there are all the elements, on paper at any rate, of a serious clash of authority in this arrangement, and very soon after it was adopted, the position of the Council was the subject of discussion in Parliament. In 1869 the matter was debated in the House of Lords, when lawyers took hopelessly conflicting views. But the Duke of Argyll laid down the common-sense political doctrine. He held that the Council,

<sup>1</sup> Lord Morley, writing to Lord Minto whilst discussing the projected Reform scheme, said: "There was always the off-chance that something might go wrong, first in Cabinet, second in my Council, and third, and most dangerous, in the H. of C." (*Recollections*, ii. 216). He was "relieved" at not having to overrule his Council (*ibid.* ii. 317).

<sup>2</sup> *Government of India Act*, 1858, s. 53.

though a quasi-Parliament for certain matters, and instituted by Parliament as its deputy, was yet subject to Parliament. "It ought to be clearly understood that the moment the House steps in and expresses an opinion on a subject connected with India, that moment the jurisdiction of the Council ought to cease." The point, however, is not so much what such a body would do on the occasion of open conflict with the Secretary of State, the Cabinet, or Parliament itself (as when the House of Lords challenged the financial authority of the House of Commons in 1909), but what its influence is in the ordinary conduct of Indian affairs. Constitutional definitions are rarely the subject of high dispute. The Council is there day by day, a perpetual influence, a presence that is felt—and that is its importance.

Attempts have been made from time to time to reconstruct the Council, and the Government in 1914 proposed, in a Bill which was mainly consolidating, that the Secretary could appoint Committees of the Council to take "departments" of business in charge. This is an old proposal and is made by those who wish to strengthen the authority of the Council. It is alleged that specialisation would mean more definite responsibility and more thoroughness in work. It might, but it proceeds on the assumption that important authority ought still to be exercised from London, and that the Secretary for India should have a divided responsibility between Parliament and his Council. Not a few who advocate the change also wish to strengthen the Council against both the Secretary and Parliament. For these very reasons, the proposal strikes at both Parliamentary control and self-government, and ought to be opposed. For reasons which I now proceed to give, the Council should be weakened and abolished rather than strengthened and fixed in the Indian Constitution.

Since 1860 things have changed greatly. The authority of government has gone more and more to India itself, and the opinion which guides it cannot be reproduced by Anglo-Indians or Indians sitting in Whitehall, but only by Indians

living in India and by Indian institutions. If the Secretary requires any guidance here it ought to be given by a Parliamentary Advisory Committee which will watch Indian affairs lest haply light can be thrown upon them by our own experiences. An Indian as Under-Secretary at Whitehall would be desirable,<sup>1</sup> but the appointment to the Council of Indians separated from India and living in a foreign atmosphere of thought and interest does not amount to much, and certainly can never justify the existence of such an authority. It is a cumbersome machine of check and counter-check if it has any use at all. It destroys real Parliamentary interest without giving Indian control or expert political advice. It prevents such a reorganisation of the India Office duties as will put that Office into proper relationship with the Indian Government on the one hand, and British representative institutions on the other. It is not government or advice by the expert, but by the official. It is an adjunct to bureaucracy, not to Indian opinion. It is a Civil Service imposed as a check upon a Legislature, and it becomes more and more anomalous as representative institutions in India are established and broadened.

At the moment, the machine works, but the relation of its parts is ill defined. The intention of Parliament in 1858 was apparently to give the power of initiative to the Government in India, that of examination and revision to the Secretary of State's Council, that of veto to the Secretary himself. But that did not suit a Home Cabinet, which had views of its own on certain Indian affairs, especially economic ones, and in 1870 the Duke of Argyll in correspondence with Lord Mayo, the Viceroy, issued an order that the Government in India was part of the Home Executive and subordinate to the Cabinet, and that official members and the Viceroy should take instructions from home. This point was raised later on by Lord Salisbury when he insisted upon being consulted on all legislative proposals of importance; and when,

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written this has been done.



in 1875, the Government of India passed a Tariff Bill imposing duties upon cotton, angry correspondence followed, and Lord Salisbury issued his order that the duty would have to be removed as quickly as possible. Upon this, the Viceroy resigned. It has also been laid down by a Secretary of State that the Council can be independent in its criticism only so long as the Cabinet allows it. But these high pronouncements do not disturb the normal working of the machine. The Government in India holds the administrative initiative; the Secretary of State holds the legislative and constitutional initiative provided he carries his Council with him; the control of Parliament is in reserve to be used when required.

Thus we understand how the control of Parliament has always remained obscure, and in recent times the doctrine has become fashionable in some quarters that it hardly exists. We have been told that the Government in India is the only Indian Government. That, however, has no legal nor historical countenance. It is the doctrine of a ruling class. Let us not put the value of Parliamentary control too high, however. The democratic theory of Parliamentary control rests on the fact that a representative Parliament has as its judge and arbiter the people who experience its rule; but obviously a Parliament acting as a trustee for people not represented in it, has none of the characteristics of a representative authority, and is only subject to the public opinion of the trustee constituencies on matters relating to the people held in wardship. Now, British opinion on Indian affairs does not exist except on odd events at odd times. Parliament therefore controls Indian affairs, as a matter of actual fact, only in so far as the very few British subjects in Parliament or out of it take a continuous interest in, or have a real knowledge of, Indian matters. What little this amounts to is seen in the deserted House of Commons when the Indian Budget is under discussion. Accepted British moral or political standards cannot be violated without Parliamentary



challenge, but it is difficult to get that interest and knowledge in the constituencies or in Parliament to say when they are violated, and the rule is that the Government in India, so far as Parliament is concerned, has things pretty much in its own hands. Besides, the fact that a large proportion of members of both Houses interested in India are men who have been in one or other of the Indian Services reduces the value of Parliament as a controlling authority.

Thus we have to face this difficulty. The control of Parliament over India cannot in the nature of things mean the same thing as the control of Parliament over Home affairs; a bureaucratic Government in India can never be trusted with arbitrary powers, because such arbitrariness would be more objectionable than a Moghul tyranny, which was, in the last resort, curbed by rebellion or poison; therefore, whilst Parliamentary control is an enormous advance upon Company rule, and is a constitutional fact which should be strenuously preserved and not allowed to lapse into practical desuetude, there is a stage beyond it when the real control of Indian government should rest with those who benefit or suffer from that government. Parliament must be careful, however, not to abandon its control in a transition stage when certain Indian interests and classes are enfranchised and have power (whether they use it or not does not matter) to oppress other interests and classes not yet enfranchised. The period of trusteeship is not ended until India can be responsible for its own government as Australia, Canada, and South Africa are.

The changes now required are that the Secretary of State's salary, like that of the Colonial Secretary, should be put upon the British Estimates; that, as has been done recently, the Under-Secretary should be an Indian whenever possible—indeed there is no reason why, if an Indian with the requisite knowledge of and position in British politics should exist, he should not be the Secretary of State; the Council should be abolished and its place taken by a Departmental Advisory Committee appointed each session from Members of Parliament—this

last being created not owing to any special circumstances connected with the India Office, but as part of a great scheme to associate Parliament more intimately than it now is with the administration of Departments; there should steadily be kept in view the end when Parliamentary control over Indian affairs will fade to the intangible shadow which it now is over Dominion affairs.

## CHAPTER III

### THE VICEROY

THE supreme head of the Government in India is the Viceroy ; but however high the pinnacle upon which he sits may soar above the Himalayan heights of the rulers of India, it comes decidedly short of the august peaks of kingship. The Viceroy is surrounded by pomp and awe ; ceremony walks behind and before him, and does obeisance to him. But everyone seems to be conscious that he comes and goes, and that when the guns have fired their parting salute on his leaving Bombay at the end of five years, he steps down from his summit and returns to a meaner dwelling-place. In the minds of the masses he is the great lord ; in those of the educated and political sections he is the head of the administration, and enjoys an authority which is great but limited and is not altogether removed from controversy.

The viceroyalty is doomed to the limits of constitutional government. Appointed by warrant under the Royal Sign Manual, the Viceroy is required "to pay due obedience to all such orders as he may receive from the Secretary of State," and he is given advisers who are more than advisers. Moreover, he comes, knowing little about India, to work with a powerful body of men knowing, in one sense, everything about India, and he is a man of an exceptional will if he disagrees with his advisers and reaches his own goals. He goes out with an unformed mind ; it takes him at least a year to get the hang of things ; he packs up during the last year ; he is working all the time with a machine too big and too complex for any man to control.

The Viceroy came when the Company ended, and its vast possessions passed to the Crown. In the first stage of the Company its affairs, then trading only, were administered from the three centres of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta by a President acting with a Council of the senior servants of the Company. These Presidents were directly subject to the Board of Directors in London. But when the Company's trade drove it into politics and politics drove it into war, an organisation well enough adapted to keep ledgers and stores and conduct the diplomacy of trade, was of no use. The Company had established a market which was transformed under its hands into an Empire, and in the transformation men, surrounded by temptation and opportunity to amass wealth, succumbed. The Company's finances fell upon evil days; the Company's servants returned with untold wealth. So in 1773 Parliament had to step in and passed the Regulating Act, the political purpose of which was to co-ordinate the government of the Presidencies by placing Bengal at their head. Madras and Bombay were not to be allowed to make wars without the consent of Bengal. Thus the supremacy of Bengal was established, its Governor was to be Governor-General, and he, sitting in Council, was to be the supreme political authority of the Presidencies. He was still to be appointed by the Company, and was given a Council of four. Warren Hastings was, however, named in the Act as the first Governor-General, and the members of his Council were also named, but further appointments were to be made by the Directors. By the Act of 1784, however, the nomination of the Governor-General by the Directors had to receive the approval of the Crown. The first two Governors-General belonged to the regime of Company servants, but Lord Cornwallis went out in 1786, the first of the great political Governors.

The transformation from trade to politics and from markets to empires went on apace, and the Act of 1833 accepted the change and was passed to meet its requirements. In this



Act words were used for the first time which implied that we were governing India and not merely Bengal, Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay; the Governor-General was no longer "of Bengal," but "of India." In 1854 the Governor-General was relieved of his duties as the Governor of Bengal, and a Lieutenant-Governor was appointed to that Province. In 1858 India was transferred to the Crown, and the Governor-General became Viceroy and was appointed by Royal Warrant, his term of office being five years. The term "Viceroy" was used in the Proclamation of Lord Canning's appointment in 1858, but has not appeared in constitutional documents. It is in use for courtesy and ceremonial purposes only. The seat of the Government of India remained, however, in Calcutta, thus continuing its historical origin in the Governorship of Bengal, until 1912, when it was transferred to Delhi, and all traces of the day when the Governorship of Bengal carried with it the Governor-Generalship of India disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

The Viceroy has power as well as title and prestige. He makes himself responsible for the foreign affairs of India—chiefly frontier matters and the relation of the Native States to the Government of India—as though he were head of that Department, and he takes an active concern in every important piece of business done by any Department.<sup>2</sup> His authority is derived from being "in Council," and he must, as a rule, carry a majority of his Council with him. But whilst that is a real check, it comes far short of an absolute one. Saving in certain directions, each Viceroy makes his own power. Lord Curzon did what he liked, his successor did what other people liked, and his successor again took the medium course of doing in his own way what he and other people wished to do, and used the support of Indian opinion

<sup>1</sup> The Durbar at which the change was announced was held at Delhi in December 1911.

<sup>2</sup> The power of declaring peace or war or to make treaties is expressly withheld from the Viceroy and his Council, and reserved for the Home Government.

in doing some things of which his Council did not approve.

The Viceroy performs three great functions. He personifies the Crown, he represents the Home Government, he is the head of the administration.

The first is now his proper function. He is the Crown visible in India, the ceremonial head of the sovereignty, the great lord. He is the seat of justice and mercy, and catches up in himself, by virtue of his office, the historical traditions and sentiments of rulership. The more this is isolated from his other functions the better will be our system of rule in India.

As representative of the Home Government he has his origin in a political party, and though owing to changes in the political wheel of fortune at home he may find himself the representative of a party which is not his own—as Lord Minto did when the Liberals came into power at the end of 1905—he has to carry out its policy or resign—as Lord Lytton did in 1880 when a general election wiped out the Conservative majority. Whilst performing this function he is really subordinate to the Secretary of State. Lord Salisbury made this perfectly plain to Lord Northbrook in 1875.<sup>1</sup> The amount of this subordination, however, depends on the personality of the Viceroy and the Secretary. Lord Salisbury made this subordination apparent with his fist, Lord Morley with his persuasiveness. On purely Indian affairs it scarcely exists, though in such matters as police behaviour and frontier politics the Viceroy has to consider British opinion and Parliamentary interest. It is most definite when British and Indian interests conflict and when the Viceroy, believing that those of India lie in one direction—*i.e.* cotton duties—is yet forbidden to pursue it by the Home Government. His subordination in this respect involves the subordination of his Council, as Lord Lytton found when he took Lord Northbrook's place and proceeded to carry out the instructions

<sup>1</sup> Cf. chap. ii. p. 51.

which Lord Northbrook declined. Again, as custodian of the Foreign affairs of India, he has to carry out the policy of the Home Government in all matters of Imperial interest whether for the good of India or not, but he is in a position—like Dalhousie—to make certain developments necessary. The rein that controls him is of necessity somewhat loose. In his relations with the Native States he has a pretty free hand, and the frontier policy he pursues must be determined by what arises, but he must always remember the general Imperial opinions of the party in power at home. Nominally the power of declaring war is withheld from him; actually he has the power of creating the conditions which lead to war. In this respect the action of the India Office under Mr. Broderick in revising and substantially altering, in 1904, the treaty which the Indian Government made with Tibet emphasised the subordination of the Viceroy as the mouthpiece and echo of the Home Government, and the discomfiture of the wilful Lord Curzon in his contest with Lord Kitchener was a further demonstration of the subordination of the Viceroy to the Secretary of State. Lord Morley introduced a gentler hand but not a new policy.

As the head of the Indian administration the Viceroy has much opportunity of acting as autocrat, as Lord Hardinge sometimes did with good practical results. His minatory warning to the South African Government when it was acting tyrannically and oppressively to Hindus was made on his own initiative when sojourning in Madras and without consulting his advisers, it is said. In performing this function he is limited by the India Office and the Secretary of State, and by his Council, but an enlightened Viceroy like Lord Hardinge will also take into account what he conceives to be Indian public opinion and will act upon it and take the risks. But he has to bear his share of any unpopularity which his Council may receive, and in this position he, like a Prime Minister, is at the head of a Government which, under the conditions of India, has the country for an official Opposition.

Obviously, it is undesirable that this union of functions should last ; it cannot last after the political consciousness of India has become awakened. The Viceroy should remain the representative of the Crown and be endowed with the dignity of that office. But he ought not to be the representative of the Home Government or the responsible head of the Indian administration. The President of the Council should be a separate functionary, and the Viceroy should be kept in touch with the India Office and the Indian administration as the Crown is kept in touch with the Cabinet and Parliament. That change is necessary in the interest of the Viceroy himself, and in that of India, and the development of responsible government there demands that it should be made without delay.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

THE affairs of the Company in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay were administered by the President and a Council consisting of the senior servants of the Company. Decisions were arrived at by voting. Lord North's Regulating Act of 1773 appointing a Governor-General gave him a Council of four; eleven years later the number was reduced to three, of whom the Commander-in-Chief was to be one; nine years afterwards it was decided that if the Commander-in-Chief should sit on the Council he was to be an extra member; a fourth member was added in 1833 for legislative purposes—the Law member—but he was not to be allowed to take part in administrative business, and this limitation existed till 1853; in 1861 a fifth member was added to take charge of finance; in 1874 power was given to the Governor-General to add a sixth member to look after Public Works, but the power was not always used, and in 1904 such an appointment was definitely provided for.<sup>1</sup> The members are appointed by Royal Warrant; they must at present be five, but, by the will of the Crown, may be six, three of whom must have been, at the time of appointment, at least ten years in the service of the Crown in India, and one must be a barrister or advocate of at least five years' standing. The Commander-in-Chief

<sup>1</sup> The Bill which Mr. Disraeli introduced in 1858 to transfer the Government of India to the Crown proposed that part of the Council should be elected by holders of India Government and Railway stock resident in Manchester and other large towns, but the confusion of a Legislature and an Executive combined with such an absurd franchise was laughed to scorn.

may be appointed an extraordinary member, and when the Council sits in a province which has a Governor, that Governor is, for the time being, also an extraordinary member.

The evolution of the Council is not without interest. The Regulating Act established Committee Government and gave the Committee a chairman. There was no attempt, as is usual in the government of dependencies, to consult any interest except that of the trading Company, and it is from that beginning that we must always remember to trace the evolution of Indian government if we are to understand it. The next stage was that of individual rule after consultation with a Committee, a Secretary of State standing behind to check and correct if the ruler disagreed with his advisers.

The feud between Philip Francis, who was named in the Regulating Act a Member of Council, and Warren Hastings was conducted in India by two parties on the Council of which the Francis party was the stronger. That ended majority rule. Lord Cornwallis, who succeeded, insisted upon being able to override a majority of the Council should he feel it to be necessary to do so, and that remains the position to-day. The rule is that the Viceroy should act with the majority of his Council, but he may set aside that majority if he disagrees with it on matters which he considers affect "the safety, tranquillity, or interests of British India." Then, however, if two members of the Council insist upon it, a statement of the point in dispute, with minutes and explanations, must be sent to the Secretary of State.

Then the next stage came. At first the Council was a Committee of similar members and not a gathering of departmental heads. But as the work of administration became more complicated, it had to be specialised. First of all came the appointment of the Law member, and then the Finance one was added, and when Canning's reforming hand rearranged Indian administration, to each member of Council was assigned a special department for the working of which he was to be responsible to the Governor-General. During

the Governor-Generalship of both Lord Canning and Lord Elgin this responsibility was real and rigid, but it gradually slackened, as it was bound to do, though according to the Report of the Decentralisation Commission "a large amount of work" is still thrown on the Viceroy as the final authority in all departmental affairs.

Then the Council became a Cabinet<sup>1</sup> such as we had in the last generation when the Prime Minister listened to the advice of his departmental heads and decided for himself.<sup>2</sup> But it was more than a Cabinet, for it was really responsible for the rules and regulations which the Governor-General was empowered to issue as laws; and though such regulations had to comply with certain conditions and might be upset by the King in Council, the authority which issued them was a quasi-Legislature. Later on Legislative Councils appeared, so limited in their powers, however, and so constituted that to this day the Council has more legislative authority than the Legislative Councils. The evolution is now tending to weaken the Executive in this respect and strengthen the other until in fact the latter becomes what it is in name, a Legislative Council.

At present the Executive consists of the Viceroy, who keeps, as I have said, in his own hands responsibility for Foreign Affairs, including the control of the Frontier Province; the Commander-in-Chief, who is the head of the Military Department; and members in charge of Home; Finance; Revenue and Agriculture; Public Works; Commerce and Industry; Military Supply<sup>3</sup>; Education and Legal Departments. These offices are held for five years, and are filled by the Crown, for the most part hitherto from members of the Indian

<sup>1</sup> Though the use of this word requires a warning that its strict employment is in connection with Parliamentary Government, and not with a bureaucracy of Civil Servants and Crown appointees.

<sup>2</sup> Lord Curzon's statement (*Indian Speeches*, ii. p. 299) that "the Viceroy has no more weight in his Council than any individual member of it" is a fanciful exaggeration of the Viceroy's weakness.

<sup>3</sup> Under the control of the Commander-in-Chief.



Civil Service. The Legal member is not a civilian, the Finance member generally is taken alternately from the Home and the Indian Civil Service; the most recent appointment to the Education Department—Sir Sankaran Nair—came from the Madras Bench; two Indians have been appointed to the Legal Department, one a Hindu and the other a Mohammedan, and it was assumed that the Law member would henceforth be an Indian chosen alternately from the Hindu and the Mohammedan communities, though it is said not to have worked very well. It would have been unfortunate, however, had any special office been ear-marked in this way, and an Englishman was appointed in 1915. The Civil Service is exceedingly jealous of any encroachment upon its rights to fill these offices, which it considers belong to it as part of the Service for which its members were recruited, and when Mr. Clark (now Sir William) was sent from the Home Service to take charge of Commerce and Industry in 1910, much dissatisfaction arose in the Indian Service.

The members of Council control the administration of their offices subject to the approval of the Viceroy, who has to be consulted on certain eventualities,<sup>1</sup> and they meet usually once a week as a Cabinet to discuss with the Viceroy matters submitted to them. Each Department has a Secretary corresponding to the Permanent Secretary to a Department at home, and these Secretaries attend Council meetings to give information.

The Governor-General presides over the Council, but when he is absent, a member, generally the senior member, may take his place and may otherwise act for him. During Lord Hardinge's illness after he was hurt by the bomb at Delhi, Sir Guy Fleetwood-Wilson, the Finance member, presided regularly over the Council meetings.

<sup>1</sup> "In the year 1907-8 no less than 21·7 per cent. of the cases which arose in, or came up to, the Home Department required submission to the Viceroy" (*Report of the Decentralisation Commission*, Cd. 4360, 1909, p. 11). From the nature of its work this proportion is much higher in this Department than in any other.



A Cabinet composed like this mainly of Civil Servants and officials has obvious drawbacks. Members do not resign upon policy, for they are an administrative Civil Service. The scheme of Indian Government lacks the element of responsibility. As regards India, the Council is a superior will ; as regards the Secretary of State, it is a superior knowledge. At no place in the system of Indian administration does public opinion come in with its fresh motives, ideals, and purposes formed outside offices and nurtured on something else than departmental files. From beginning to end, the office and the official mind dominate Indian Government, and thus the work of Delhi and Simla consists very largely in imposing upon India what departmental offices and officials consider to be advantageous. Hence the bureaucracy becomes self-centred, the governing machine becomes polished but unsympathetic, mechanical accuracy and efficiency are its inspirations rather than a desire for freedom and experiment. The official controls the policy as well as the working of the policy. The result is admirable as an efficient administrative product, it *gives* great benefits to the people, but the system lacks that adaptability and accommodation to outside opinion which, it is true, the expert generally holds in low esteem, but which is the secret of political wisdom. It is strong in everything except the faculty of consulting the people. It has not understood the truth that is in the adage that wise government is self-government even if it be not the most efficient government.

Now, a change is coming. Outside opinion, better organised than ever, more representative, and with some authority on the various Legislative Councils, is compelling the bureaucracy to listen, and many members of the bureaucracy are listening gladly. The expert is recognising the fact that his task is getting more difficult as he has now to deal with a political spirit, and he is preparing to meet his changed circumstances. The appointment of Sir Sankaran Nair to the Education Department was of far more significance than that of an Indian

lawyer to the Law Department, because it was an appointment of an Indian to a Department of constructive policy and not to one of technical knowledge ; but the time has now come for a much bolder advance. The Legislature must be joined to the Executive by the appointment of members of the Legislature to some of the Departments.

This Cabinet of Civil Servants was inevitable. It had to take possession of those high executive offices which are political in their nature, because there were no politics in India. The nominees of monarchs and rulers have always filled these posts because India has been autocratically ruled, and there has been none of those safeguards of democratic administration like the separation of the legislative from the administrative functions of the Government. The King and his servants have been the administration, the Courts, and the Legislature. The British compromise between its own method of government and the conditions of India was to send out a Viceroy who would have some political experience, or at any rate political opinions of a general character, and who would be guided and advised by men who had spent their lives in administering Indian districts. Thus the mind of general intention and that of detailed knowledge were mingled, and if the latter, from the circumstances of the case, was almost uniformly the more powerful, it was honest and devoted. If "superior" it was not corrupt, and its most severe critic can attribute to it no vices excepting those which belong to its own nature, and to the system of government which it found established in India and from which it derived its parentage.

The members of the Council sit as members of the Imperial Legislative Council and have to answer questions and take charge of the business of their various Departments. When the Legislative Councils were established in 1853, the Viceroy's Council was embarrassed by questions and criticisms, and had to be protected in 1861, by curtailing the power of Legislative Councils, as I shall describe in the next

chapter. But the movement so suddenly begun in 1853 cannot be kept back for ever. The India Councils Bill of 1909 transplanted the Executive Council into a new political atmosphere. It had to face a body with very limited powers, it is true, but with constituencies behind it, so that if the Council itself is not the creation of public opinion it now has to meet those who represent some of that opinion. It therefore found itself beset by two influences, the Viceroy with a Home Government on the one hand, and the Legislative Council on the other, and the impact of both upon it is producing effects of a political kind. The Council will tend more and more to become like a British Cabinet. Its members who have political aptitudes for debate and co-operation with others of dissimilar views will take more and more delight in the changed circumstances under which they have to work. For, when all is said and done, a Parliamentary life is richer and more interesting than one spent in the administrative service.

In time the new function of the Council will make changes in its membership, and the work of Departments is already so complicated that it ought to be redistributed and new Departments formed. Men who have shown political capacity of high order will be chosen to sit on it, and in the end it will cease to be regarded as a section of the Civil Service, and will become, as it ought to be, a branch of the Legislature. The Legislative Council, rather than the administration, will supply its recruits. But that is not yet, and some things must happen before that change will be fully accomplished. Moreover, it will not be made all at once. It may be that the Council will be enlarged and the new Departments filled by others than Civil Servants. Certainly a proposal which is both bad and inadequate is that in the Montagu-Chelmsford report, to increase the Indian membership to two and continue the present method of appointment. The first thing is to limit the Civil Service appointments to what they now are, terminate the rights of new recruits to regard these



offices as belonging to the Civil Service, and establish as a constitutional practice the appointment by the Crown of members who have had legislative experience. But in whatever way events may happen, a complete change in the Executive Council is ultimately inevitable. One important circumstance will make it easy. The argument now is that the Civil Service, with its overwhelming preponderance of British-born men in its highest offices, is the only guarantee of British responsibility, and that the Viceroy's Council in a special way represents and emphasises the British supremacy. The Council ought, therefore, according to this view, to be manned mainly from the Civil Service. But when Indians share more largely in the highest offices of the Service, this argument will be weakened. The Indian civilian will have no better claims to a seat on the Council than a score of other Indians who have proved their worth and capacity in other ways. At the same time, the Legislatures will be becoming more and more evidently the sources from which the Viceroy's Council members should be drawn. That is in accordance with the operation of things wherever British ideas of government rule, and it is also in accordance with the evolution of the Council's powers and composition. This democratic conception of the relation between the Executive and the Civil Service on the one hand, and the Legislative Councils on the other, ought at once to begin to show itself in the machinery of Indian government.



## CHAPTER V

### THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Up to 1830 the Governor-General and his Executive Council were both the Executive and the Legislature of the Indian Government, but in that year a Law member was added for purely legislative purposes, but with no right to sit or vote during executive business, and thus began some differentiation between the legislative and the executive functions and organisation of the Government. In 1853 a further change was made. The Law member became an ordinary member of the Council, and two judges and four members of the Company's service appointed by the four provinces that then existed were added. In a minute addressed to the India Office, the Marquess of Dalhousie, who was responsible for the change, describes it thus: "A Council was appointed as the Legislature of India, which was no longer identical with the Supreme Council, but included divers other members and exercised its functions by separate and distinct proceedings of its own." That year another characteristic essential to a Legislature, the publicity of its proceedings, was provided by statute. The development of this Council since then has been the most important feature in Indian government.

The reforms in the Legislative Council effected in 1853 alarmed the Indian authorities. Whig principles were in the ascendant at home. Parliamentary Government was considered to be essential to liberty, and one of the necessary functions of Parliament was to criticise and lead the Executive. This the new Legislative Council set about with a right

good will, and criticised the Executive. It "evinced an inconvenient tendency to interfere with the Executive."<sup>1</sup> But just as in a previous generation an independent judiciary in the shape of a Calcutta Supreme Court was regarded as an offence by the Executive, so the Legislature was now also regarded, and in 1861, whilst its legislative authority was extended, and its members increased, especially on the non-official side, its powers were prescribed and limited to the discussion of legislative proposals only. These restrictions were not modified until 1892, when, under certain rules which had to be drawn up by the Executive, discussion upon the Financial Statement was to be permitted and questions to heads of Departments allowed. At the same time, the power to legislate was restored to the Councils of Madras and Bombay, and legislative members added to the Executives there to form a Legislative Council. Other Provinces might have Legislative Councils on proclamation by the Governor-General. Thus the legislative rights of the provinces that were withdrawn in 1833 were restored, and the foundations of a separate Legislature and of self-government for the Provinces were laid anew. The unity of Indian government is preserved in the official authority of the Governor-General to sanction Provincial legislation and in the somewhat inconsistent power of his Legislative Council to legislate for the whole of India, no demarcation between Provincial and Imperial legislative authority being made.

Finally came the historic change of 1909 for which Lord Morley was responsible and with which his name will always be associated.

In 1906, the Viceroy, Lord Minto, drew up a dispatch summarising the reasons for a change. They can be condensed into the single sentence: the political spirit had reached a stage in India when a further participation of the political opinion of the country in its government could no longer be resisted. The view that the mass of the Indian

<sup>1</sup> *Gazetteer of India*, iv. p. 130.

people took no interest in politics at all, that their concerns were best served by an autocracy of benevolence rather than by representatives responsible to interests and opinions other than those of the masses, belonged to those considerations which look formidable on paper, but which do not differentiate between urgent vital issues and mere niceties. The thinking, agitating, and critical sections of India had in course of time become so important that the political problem which their existence had created demanded attention. Whatever considerations had to be kept in mind, the granting of further political liberty had become an axiom for practical statesmen. So after lengthy and voluminous correspondence with India, Lord Morley introduced his Bill in the House of Lords on February 17th, 1909, and on May 25th that year it became an Act of Parliament. It was a compromise between bureaucracy and democracy,<sup>1</sup> inevitably a short-lived, if necessary, experiment. The Legislative Council now consists of 33 nominated, and 27 elected members, and of the 33, not more than 28 may be officials. It is definitely provided that there must always be an official majority. Now the Indian constitution is again in the melting-pot.

The Act did not endow Councils with much more power, though it allowed them to discuss Budgets before they were finally settled, to take divisions on financial proposals, to debate matters of general interest and to put supplementary questions, and it put the representative principle on a legal basis. The authority which the Act added to the Councils lay not so much in any new powers given to them as in their being made more representative, an Act passed in 1892 having opened the door to that principle without, however, giving it definite constitutional sanction. It was allowed but not imposed.

The Councils Act of 1909 brought us a distinct stage nearer the time when the problem will arise in a practical form of

<sup>1</sup> Lord Morley specifically stated that he would have nothing to do with the reforms if they "led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a Parliamentary system in India."



the control of the Executive by the Legislature. That is staved off for the moment by the constitutional limitations imposed upon the Councils and the large element of official and nominated members upon them, as hitherto determined by the Regulations issued under the Act. On all the Councils save the Governor-General's, where there is a majority of four officials, the non-officials are in majorities which vary from thirteen in Bengal to three in Burma. That does not mean that, as yet, non-official opinion dominates the work of the Councils, because the Government controls the action of the nominated non-officials. But Indian Legislatures are still in a state of evolution. They are young, grateful, and not independent. They are approaching independence by stages, and no written letter of the Constitution can stand against the vital growth of a people. These Councils are re-elected every third year.

What is to be represented in the Legislature is a much more complicated problem in India than at home, and the rules determining this are not the same for every province. I give two examples from the Rules of 1912, the last issued at the time of writing this chapter, and I select Bengal and Burma as typical of the difficulties that had to be encountered by those who framed these schemes of representation.

The Bengal Council is limited to a membership of fifty-one, of whom twenty-eight are elected: one to represent the Calcutta Corporation, who must be a member of the Corporation; one the Calcutta University, elected by the Senate and Honorary Fellows; five, other municipalities with incomes of 5,000 rupees and over, and another five, District and Local Boards; four, groups of landowners in specified constituencies covering the province, one alternately by the Chittagong landholders and municipalities; five by the Mohammedans divided into five constituencies and holding specified qualifications; two by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, one by the Calcutta Trades Association, one by the Commissioners of the Port of Chittagong, one by Commissioners of Calcutta other than those appointed by the Local Government, and one by the tea-



planting community, the electoral roll being compiled from managers of tea gardens. The Governor nominates twenty members, not more than sixteen of whom may be officials, and two must be non-official; the Indian commercial community and the European commercial community, other than tea planters, also nominate one each.

The Burma Council has a membership of fifteen. One is elected by the Burma Chamber of Commerce and fourteen are nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor with the consent of the Governor-General; but of these not more than six may be officials and four must be Burmans, and one from the Indian and another from the Chinese communities.

A general disqualification for candidates for all Councils is that in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council "the reputation and antecedents" of the person to be nominated are such as would make his election "contrary to the public interest."

Neither the one nor the other of these schemes can be called representative government in anything but the most primitive sense, but it is worth noting that in their representation of trade and commerce they unconsciously illustrate that movement against geographical constituencies and masses of mixed electors and in favour of economic interests which has recently become a subject of controversy amongst ourselves, especially amongst our more extreme political parties. For the note of the provisions of these schemes is: "interests as apart from a common national well-being," and it is left for the Government nominations to secure the presence of spokesmen for the general national life on the Councils.

The view taken by the Government of India is that the Indian State is not sufficiently coherent to allow the creation of constituencies such as we have here, and that education and political intelligence have not permeated so far down into the strata of Indian society as to make elections, such as we know them, of value for reflecting public opinion or guaranteeing political liberty. So, in these schemes no

attempt has been made to secure popular representation. This is a real difficulty in Indian self-government. Not only do the necessary educational qualifications not exist, not only is there lacking that individual judgment on affairs of state which alone gives value to majority rule, but the want of these things gives opportunity for the exercise of influences, like bribery and corruption and other forms of undue pressure and improper practice, which when it once becomes associated with the governing processes of any State is hard to uproot. An ignorant people are a subject people whatever the form of their government may be. At the moment, and under existing conditions, "popular representation" in India would not indicate Indian opinion, but would give rise to practices which would subvert that opinion and fill a field now barren and waste—however unfortunate that may be—with tares and weeds, but certainly not with wheat.

The Indian State being therefore of a form too rudimentary and primitive below its upmost thin strata to allow democratic government, and yet at its top too enlightened to permit its offering no challenge to the rule of any kind of autocracy, we must consider what scheme of representation is possible to fit such conditions. Obviously, it is always easier to represent interest than opinion. Interest is always organised, and has always spokesmen ready at hand. That is not true of the masses, which to-day in the most advanced of States are incoherent and divided because they do not know what their interests are, or are still moved by their narrower and more immediate interests in the workshop and cannot grasp their larger and more permanent ones in the State.

Then, in India, religion, particularly when it indicates different historical conditions and origins, claims a place in the State alongside of political opinion and interest, and so the purpose of the rules of election is primarily to secure the representation of these three elements in Indian Society. University and municipal representation on the whole supply the political opinion, that of Chambers of Commerce and

landlords the interests; that of Mohammedans the religious differences.

But in this respect too we can see a change. Political interest is tending to absorb all others, and this is best seen in the use that is being made by the Mohammedans of their special privileges. It is roughly true to say that Mohammedans, having secured special representation to protect themselves, have used it to promote, with Hindus, Indian representation.

Fifty years ago, and up to the end of the reign of Sir Syed Ahmed (say 1912), the Indian Mohammedan was in India but was not of it. As the Aga Khan has well expressed it,<sup>1</sup> he "looked upon himself as a member of a universal religious brotherhood, sojourning in a land in which a neutral Government, with a neutral outlook, kept law and order and justice. His political and communal pride was satisfied by the fact that his co-religionists in Turkey, Persia, Morocco, and (nominally at least) in Egypt, enjoyed independence and national sovereignty." Accordingly, he formed his Moslem Leagues as rivals to, and safeguards against, the encroachments of a politically and educationally active Hinduism. But, as I have shown in the introductory chapter, he has now passed out of that stage and is uniting with his Hindu fellow Indian upon an Indian platform. Here is the basis of an Indian electorate. Whether the representatives of this electorate should be direct or indirect does not seem to me to be of great consequence for the moment, because, for the reasons which I have already given, the difficulties of direct election must remain very great for yet a while.

The Indian system of representation will have to remain varied in its ways of election for a time, and will have to reflect diverse methods of ascertaining public opinion, and even a certain number of nominated persons may have to be included in the Councils. Direct election can be resorted to in constituencies formed to enable an educational test to

<sup>1</sup> *India in Transition*, pp. 22 et seq.



be imposed, as is now done with the universities, but the electors' roll must be increased, and institutions of a lower status and tests of a lower standard than university examinations must be recognised. Education is not book-learning—it is not even literary—and a test much lower than the B.A. could safely be resorted to for Indian electors. Interests also may have to be represented, but in that case they must not be confined to those of trade and commerce, and organisations like co-operative societies should be brought in. Then there is the vexed question of caste and religious communities. Ought they to be recognised in representation? The Western at once rejects such an idea, and the Montagu-Chelmsford Report gives it no countenance beyond a regretful admission that Mohammedans being separately recognised now, it would not be possible to go back upon that, and that the Sikhs may also be able to establish a claim for themselves.

The more one examines the question, the more inclined is one to favour the expedient if only as a temporary measure. In any event, the Montagu-Chelmsford examination of the subject is remarkably weak. This Report argues that the system is opposed to history, that it perpetuates class division and stereotypes existing relations. The argument on the first count is that nations developing the arts of self-government have always pressed for a united and not “a divided allegiance”—an argument of very doubtful validity, both as to the actual description of what has taken place and of the effect of community recognition. The State of composite nationality and community, so far from having disappeared, presents to modern statesmanship some of its most interesting and pressing problems. What is called “a divided allegiance” is a mere figment; the problem is one of a co-operating allegiance, separately recognised. The second count is also a gratuitous assumption which does not correspond to experience; and is certainly not borne out by what has happened since separate Mohammedan representation was granted; whilst the substance in the third count consists in its verbal



form. Are the existing relations already stereotyped? Is India in the near future likely to be without them? The irritating problems of the small nationality, of the type of Ulster, included in a State of different nationality are likely to be solved by constitutional rights being secured to the minority; and there is very good reason for believing that when minority rights are thus recognised, so far from a divided allegiance being created or existing differences being stereotyped, unity will be promoted. Can Indian communities and sections subordinate to other communities and sections, in the way that subordination exists in India, ever receive representative protection or gain in their own esteem or in the esteem of others that dignity and respect which are necessary for communal unity, better than by being recognised upon terms of political equality with predominant communities? Theoretically, there is nothing to be said against the experiment. Practically, we must recognise that much of the bitterness between religious and social communities in India—like the organised opposition of the non-Brahmins in Madras to the Brahmins—is the opposition of injured inferiors to superiors. I have changed my mind on this point, because on careful consideration I see that certain communities that ought to be represented will not be represented except by special provision, that the representation of these communities will raise their status, and that it will bring them into that national co-operation in the Councils which is bound to issue not in division but in unity of interest and spirit.

As an alternative to this a scheme of Proportional Representation might be adopted, because this system of election is peculiarly adapted to such countries of diverse minorities and communities as India, but this presupposes a large composite register. It is preferable, however, to any other scheme, if it could be worked, but failing it, it is impossible to erect a body of valid objections to community representation.

On the other hand, the proposal for the direct representation of trade through Chambers of Commerce has nothing to be said

in its favour from the point of view of sound political theory. It is subversive of every conception of representative democracy as the mirror of general good, and is designed to protect and advance the interests of a class in India, and be some buttress to the dominant race. These interests may have to be pacified, but if that be so, the Government has a duty to see that membership of the Chambers shall be thrown widely open to every one engaged in commerce, so that the representation of a social function and not of an interested coterie is secured.

As regards indirect representation, its basis should be local governing bodies from the panchayets upwards to the great municipalities. In order to bring in the very smallest of these bodies, it might be well to elect electoral colleges in the first instance such as is done at the American Presidential Elections. Groups of these bodies might elect a member to the Electoral College, which would meet and elect whoever is to represent the District on the Legislature. Indirect representation of this kind is, however, a very bad expedient, and should be countenanced only temporarily.

The Imperial Legislative Council should be wholly composed of representatives of the Provincial Councils, with perhaps a few nominated members limited in number and named before the others are elected. I assume that no Province is to be without its Council. The Imperial body should act as a Second Chamber to the Provincial ones and the Viceroy should have power to ask it to consider and decide upon doubtful legislation passed in the Provinces.

The whole of this scheme is transitional. I believe it to be the only practical machinery of representative government that is possible in India at present, and to implant there in an academic way forms of Western growth is to repeat the mistakes we have made again and again in assuming that India was England, and that there was nothing that pertained to good except what was English. Moreover, the democratic methods which some recent converts to Indian self-government are hastening to apply to India are being challenged at

home by democrats on account of their shortcomings and failures to secure true representative government.

There still remains the question of the position of the Ruling Chiefs with their varying amounts of authority within their States. It is difficult to fit them into a representative system. Their personal dignity and the spirit of government which they represent raise insuperable obstacles.<sup>1</sup> But in the first place, their dignity depends upon ceremonial which can be retained, and in the next a policy should be pursued of making these States locally autonomous whenever possible. India has everything to gain by a recognition of differences, so long as these differences can be blended into a harmonious whole. Beyond that, an annual Conference of these rulers attended by the Executive and presided over by the Viceroy will adequately meet the case.

In connection with the Imperial Legislative Council I have discussed the whole question of representation, as that seemed the most convenient procedure, leaving the questions of function to be discussed when I deal with the Provincial Councils. Although the political mind of educated India has been moulded in Western ways of thought, it would be a mistake to approach the problem of Indian representation from Western standpoints alone. We have not said the only, nor the last, word in democratic representation, and the system that is to be applied to any country must be moulded to suit the conditions of that country. Therefore, the Indian system cannot be created on any one simple or consistent theory. The practical problem is not to compile registers which will be so big that they will represent India in the same way that our registers represent Great Britain, but to examine the interests that a good system of representation would protect and co-ordinate and see that they have due weight in the composition of the Councils. I believe that the methods I have indicated will allow this to be done.

<sup>1</sup> The Maharaja of Jaipur once sat on the Viceroy's Council, but there is less disposition on the part of Ruling Chiefs to do so now than before.



## CHAPTER VI

### PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

#### I—HEADS OF PROVINCES

FOR the purposes of administration India is divided into fifteen Provinces: Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, having governors appointed direct by the Sovereign; the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab, Burma, and Bihar and Orissa with Lieutenant-Governors, and the Central Provinces, Assam, and the North-west Frontier Province, Delhi, Ajmere-Merwara, Coorg, British Beluchistan, and the Andaman Islands with Chief Commissioners. Bengal was divided in 1905 into Bengal and Eastern Bengal, but, owing to a troublesome and continued agitation on the ground that the division cut the Bengali people into two, it was redivided at the time of the Delhi Durbar in 1911, and Bihar and Orissa and Assam were created.

The origin of the Provinces is found in the early trading settlements (called Presidencies because the chief officer responsible for them to the Company was called the President) of the East India Company at Bombay, Madras (Fort George), and Calcutta (Fort William), which were, up to the Regulating Act of 1773, independent administrations. As area after area was added, it was at first attached to one or other of these Presidencies. In 1833 the Presidency of Agra (called then the North-west Provinces) was created from the long stretch of territory that had been added to Bengal up the valleys of the Jumna and Ganges, and a Governor was to be appointed; but in 1835 the Governorship, which had not been filled, was changed into a Lieutenant-Governorship, and the



officer was appointed by the Governor-General in Council. Since then, no Governorships have been created, except that of Bengal on the repartition of 1911. Boundaries have been adjusted, however, and new Provinces created from time to time, until the present arrangements were fixed.

Most of these new districts were governed at first as non-Regulation Provinces by a Commissioner directly subject to the Governor-General,<sup>1</sup> and hence arose the distinction between a Regulation and a non-Regulation Province. In the Regulation districts the administration was determined by regulations issued by the Governor-General in Council, but in the new districts it was found that these regulations could not be applied with mechanical uniformity. A somewhat free hand had, therefore, to be given to officers who, whilst administering in the spirit of the Regulations, had to use personal discretion. In the non-Regulation Province the administration therefore approached to personal control; and although the assumption made by Governments was that their best men should be sent to the Regulation districts, the non-Regulation officer had a power and discretion which very often produced in him such a capacity for dealing successfully with the people as to mark him out for distinction amongst the officers in the service.<sup>2</sup>

Governors are appointed by the Crown, but are in reality chosen by the party which happens to be in power at home for the time being, from amongst their own political supporters. Sir Richard Temple, who was appointed Governor of Bombay in 1877, chiefly on account of his famine relief work, is the only exception to this rule. He had not been a Bombay civilian, however, but had served in Bengal.

The appointment of a Governor from home, as opposed to the promotion of a civilian in the Indian Service, as is the case with Lieutenant-Governors, has much to commend it.

<sup>1</sup> There were also districts within Regulation Provinces—like the Santhal Pergunnahs in Bengal—which were non-Regulation districts.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Little World of an Indian District Officer*, pp. 223, etc.

Although it is true that an inexperienced mind coming without preparation into the midst of Indian administration must rely greatly upon the advice of the experts with whom he is surrounded, and may become an echo of their opinions, the remedy is not an appointment from the Indian service, but such a change in the surrounding experts as will make the Governor's advisers more representative than they are of the various conflicting views and rival interests in Indian life.

The theory that the Cabinet head of a Department at home need not himself be an expert, but should be a person of good ability and broad political common sense, guided in his decisions by certain defined political principles determined by his party allegiance, is sound regarding Indian Governors. Their function is the general one of seeing that administration satisfies the requirements of sound policy, the ways and means and expedencies being left to be worked out by the experts. A Civil Service as a government must be a passing form of administration. It is essentially a bureaucracy, not inspired, but only checked, by public opinion; and as self-government is developed through Legislatures, Civil Service control becomes intolerable, irrespective of whether it has done its work efficiently or inefficiently.

However honest, well-intentioned and able a central bureaucracy may be, it cannot escape the doom of its defects; and one of the great defects of Delhi stretching its hands and its regulations from Cape Comorin to the Himalayas is a far too rigid uniformity, and a ponderously complicated formality which in time will crush under its weight every officer in a responsible position. Indian government calls for diversity, for spontaneity, for new ideas, for local impulses, for a faith and purpose that have not become exhausted or disillusioned by the great difficulties which bureaucratic administrators have to face, difficulties which send home some of the very best men discredited and disheartened. It is not enough that the fresh minds should go into the governing

cadre away back at its recruitment; there must also be infusions much later on.

I have found very few people who have tried to visualise the drawbacks of this system. The real governing authority in India is recruited from young men in Great Britain. They go out into this alien country with all its—for them—unnatural life, and their minds are shaped by their unnatural conditions and work. However painstaking they may be to get into touch with Indian conditions, they live a segregated life in their own coterie. They belong to tiny settlements amidst vast communities of alien civilisation and culture. One of two things must happen. They ought to be allowed, as was the case before the Suez Canal and the rapid transit to England, to sink themselves in their new world, or their critical alertness should be maintained by contact with Indian opinion in authority on the one hand, and British opinion fresh-eyed from home on the other.

It is only too occasionally that men of great capacity are sent to fill these Governorships. They have been regarded as glorified jobs for rich and vain followers, or as consolation prizes for respectable but disappointed men, or as occupation for men otherwise idle at home. This type of man fulfils none of the requirements of an Indian Governor. These Governorships offer to men desirous of facing some of the most interestingly difficult problems of Imperial politics opportunities of usefulness and satisfaction which no other political appointments afford. We must at once revise our view of Indian Governorships and regard them as posts of great importance and dignity.

The Governors are now subject to the Viceroy in Council, though he does not appoint them, and though they have the right of direct approach to the Secretary of State. This right is a survival of the time before 1773, when they were supreme in independent Presidencies formed by groups of factories and subject only to the Court of Directors and ulti-



mately to Parliament. For a long time after the Governor-General of Bengal was made supreme so as to unify policy throughout, Governors were recalcitrant and were unwilling to surrender their independence. Communication was slow and jealousy was active. Warren Hastings found that the Governor of Bombay did not consult him regarding the Mahratta troubles in 1775. This friction was the subject of negotiation and instruction as late as 1883, when it was dealt with in the Charter Act and in a dispatch in the following year from the Court of Directors to the Government of India. Instructions regarding it were again given in a dispatch in 1838. The Decentralisation Commission reported<sup>1</sup> on the relationship as it now is: "The essential point to be borne in mind is thus that at present, even in matters primarily assigned to the Provincial Governments, these (the Governors) act as the agents of the Government of India, who exercise a very full and constant check over their proceedings."

But the control of the central authorities, according to the dispatch of the Court of Directors, was to be "a just control," and not a "petty, vexatious, meddling interference."

The authority of the Governor-General in Council over Lieutenant-Governors and Chief Commissioners is more direct. The Lieutenant-Governor is appointed by the Governor-General in Council with the approval of the Crown. He is the result of an afterthought. When the Act of 1833 was passed, it was a new Governorship that was proposed by it to relieve the burden which annexation after annexation had imposed upon Bengal, but the Government, as has been said already, changed its mind, and in 1835 put a clause in a Bill giving the Governor-General power to appoint a civilian of at least ten years' standing as a Lieutenant-Governor of the new North-west Provinces. This was a new constitutional creation, an expedient to use men on the spot without importing them from home, and also to retain the Viceroy's

<sup>1</sup> *Report*, Cd. 4360, 1909, p. 21.



control over the new Provinces and the right of the Civil Service to supply the head of the administration.

The Lieutenant-Governor ought to occupy a place midway between the Civil Service to which he belongs (Sir H. Durand, appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab in 1870 is the only exception) and the representative of the Crown for whom he acts. By habit, however, the Lieutenant-Governorships have come to be regarded as posts in the Civil Service. The Lieutenant-Governor has a delegated authority, which is subject to the will of the Governor-General in Council acting with the consent of the Secretary of State in Council. That being his constitutional position, he required no Executive Council to assist him; but circumstances are changing, and an Executive Council has been given to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bihar and Orissa, and an attempt has been made to give one to the United Provinces. When there was a Lieutenant-Governor in Bengal he had an Executive Council. The Lieutenant-Governor has no direct access to the Secretary of State. Before appointment he must have served the Crown in India ten years, but in practice that period is greatly exceeded.

A Chief Commissioner is lower in rank than a Lieutenant-Governor, though, owing to recent legislation, differences between them<sup>1</sup> have been swept away, and both offices are essentially of the same nature. The Chief Commissioner is delegated by the Governor-General in Council to represent him in the administration of a certain area defined by proclamation, and he is entirely under the control of the Governor-General, whose subordinate he is and who is responsible for what the Chief Commissioner does. The office was created when new territories were added to British rule which, whilst rendering the Provinces to which they were attached unwieldy, were not sufficiently advanced or coherent to be made Provinces

<sup>1</sup> As, for instance, that a Lieutenant-Governor was part of a Legislature and could be appointed only with a Legislative Council. Commissioners may now have Legislative Councils.

with Lieutenant-Governors, but which from the nature of their population necessitated individual energy and responsibility. The designation was at first Commissioner, but when, in 1853, John Lawrence was appointed the chief of three Commissioners to bring the Punjab under British administration, he was called Chief Commissioner—a title which has been given ever since. The government of a Chief Commissioner is a transition form, although, as in the Central Provinces to-day, it is sometimes continued long after it ought to be. The anomalous position of the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces has been emphasised since 1914, when he was given a Legislative Council. Although the constitutional position of a Chief Commissioner is very different from that of a Lieutenant-Governor, in practice his powers are substantially the same, and in his own Province his authority and the respect paid to him do not suffer from his inferior status in order of precedence and in the constitutional system.

Soon all these half-and-half stages must go except on the frontiers. The work of Provincial administration is overwhelming, and the advantage of Council government is patent. No man can now govern an Indian Province. Whoever has stayed with a Lieutenant-Governor and tried to find him unoccupied except for the barest necessities of rest and food, or to get up before him in the morning, or to go to bed later than him at night, will have had an insight into what governing an Indian Province means. Important work must be given to the secretaries, must be decided without advice and discussion, must be delayed—sometimes cannot be done. Nor is there any guarantee of continuity. The Lieutenant-Governor goes at the end of his fifth year, and, save for subordinate secretaries, no authority outlasts his term of office.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The India Councils Bill of 1909 passed the House of Commons with a clause enabling the Government of India, with the consent of the Secretary of State, to create by Proclamation an Executive Council for any Lieutenant-Governor, but the House of Lords deleted this clause. It was reinserted by

Further, the practice of appointing members of the Civil Service to the political wardships of Provinces should be stopped. They ought not to be debarred, but India has everything to gain by direct infusion of home influences into her government, men with fresh minds and eyes, men who have not been moulded in Civil Service administration, men whose abilities are of a different order from those developed by magistracies, collectorships, and secretaryships. The one kind of ability ought not to be set over against the other kind. India needs both, and she should be free to use them. But if a civilian is appointed he should at once resign his position in the Service and not be eligible for further employment as a civilian.

An immediate reform is to turn Lieutenant-Governorships, and Chief Commissionerships where the districts warrant it, into Governorships, to give the Governors Councils sufficiently large to be responsible for the different great branches of

the Commons, but was finally passed in a form which provided that the Proclamation would have to lie on the table of both Houses and be disallowed by a resolution of either. This provision was put into operation by the House of Lords in 1915, when it was proposed to create a Council for the United Provinces. A Council for this Province is urgently needed, and indeed is long overdue. The status of the Province and the responsibilities of the Lieutenant-Governor call for it. The matter had come before the Legislative Council and a resolution in favour of an Executive Council received the support of exactly half the Council. The Lieutenant-Governor had to vote against, on the principle that the resolution, having otherwise failed to carry, ought not to be passed by the President of the Council, and also because it was the Government of India and not the Legislative Council of the Province that had power to determine whether there should be an Executive Council or not. The Lieutenant-Governor was personally in favour of the resolution. The House of Lords passed a resolution in opposition to the creation of a Council for the United Provinces, and it is interesting to note how frequently in the debates reference of a hostile character was made to the desire for a Council held by "certain members [of the United Provinces Legislative Council] who are advanced politicians in India" (Lord MacDonnell, *Hansard*, March 16th, 1915, p. 763. See also Lord Curzon's speech, February 16th, 1915, *ibid.*, p. 518; Lord Sydenham's, *ibid.*, p. 775, etc.). The action of the House of Lords in refusing the Council was confessedly determined by the opposition of its leading Indian members to the Indian nationalist movement.

administration, to appoint these Governors by the Crown, to secure that at least alternately these Governors shall be sent out from home, and to compose their Councils so that there shall sit upon them men representing the opinions of the Legislatures and not merely the mind of the Civil Service.



## CHAPTER VII

### PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS (*continued*)

#### II—LEGISLATURES

THE India Councils Act of 1861 consolidated and amended the law relating to Councils. The Act of 1833, passed when the idea of a united and centrally controlled India was uppermost in men's minds, not only made Bengal the superior province in India, but withdrew legislative powers from the Councils of Madras and Bombay. These powers were restored by the India Councils Act of 1861, when the vast complexities and range of Indian administration and legislation had again become apparent, and this Act further provided for the creation of Councils wherever a Lieutenant-Governorship was thereafter to be set up. Provincial Legislative Councils were set up in Bengal in 1862, in the United Provinces in 1886, in the Punjab and Burma in 1898. In 1892 they were enlarged, an elective element introduced, and a limited right of questioning and of discussing budgets was given. Finally came the Morley reform of 1909, the rules and regulations for the carrying out of which were revised in 1912, and published in a Blue book.<sup>1</sup> The Bengal Council under these rules consists of 28 elected members and 20 nominated, of whom not more than 16 may be officials and the others are composed as follows: Bihar and Orissa, 21 elected and 19 nominated, of whom not more than 15 may be officials; Assam, 11 elected and 13 nominated, of whom not more than 9 may be officials; Madras, 21 elected and 21 nominated, not more than 16 being officials; the United Provinces, 21

<sup>1</sup> Cd. 6714, 1913.

elected and 26 nominated, of whom not more than 20 may be officials; the Punjab, 8 elected and 16 nominated, of whom not more than 10 may be officials; Bombay, 21 elected and 21 nominated, of whom not more than 14 may be officials; Burma, 1 elected and 14 nominated, of whom not more than 6 may be officials. It must be noted that these are all known as "additional" members. Thus the original idea of adding members to the Executive Council for legislative work still obtains. The legislative members are in theory attached to the Executives, the Executives are not committees of the Legislatures. Indeed, the actual fact is that, though called Legislatures, they are essentially Consultative Committees attached to the Executives.

The volume of rules promulgated for the election of these Councils also contains the regulations for the discussion of the Annual Financial Statements, and of matters of general public interest, and also for the asking of questions of the Executive. No resolution on the Financial Statement may criticise a decision of the Government of India, and any resolution may be disallowed by the President of the Council. Whatever resolutions are carried are only of the nature of recommendations to the Governor or Lieutenant-Governor in Council. No resolutions may be moved on the Budget, and the Budget itself is not submitted to a vote of the Councils. Resolutions on matters of general interest may also be disallowed by the President on one of two grounds: that they are not consistent with the public interest, or that they should be moved on the Legislative Council of another Province or of the Governor-General; and again, all resolutions carried are of the nature of recommendations to the Governor in Council, or the Lieutenant-Governor. Questions must be handed in ten days before they are answered, and supplementaries are allowed, but the President has the right to refuse any question at his discretion.

The position of these Councils raises four important points for settlement.

The first is their constitutional status. The time has now come for giving them a status independent of the Executive Councils, and establishing them as the Legislatures of India. Their relations to the Executive can be determined in one of two ways. The Executive can be made to depend upon them as in Great Britain, or, as a first step, partly depend upon them ; or, as in America, the Executive can be an independent body appointed by the Viceroy, who will be expected to use discretion and common sense, and take all the political circumstances into account when making his choice of men. The latter would be most in accordance with Indian traditions, though not most in accordance with the political thought which is stirring in India and creating the demands for responsible and representative government which we have now to meet.

I have therefore in this book assumed that the relations between the Executive and Legislature ought to be determined on the British rather than on the American model. The American model, however, must not be dismissed without being considered, as it may be found to suggest convenient expedients for avoiding obvious difficulties which meet us at this moment. It must be noted, however, that whereas the American Colonies separated their Executive and Legislature in order to weaken the Executive, the separation is advocated for India for the opposite reason.

A study of the working of the American Constitution leads me to the conclusion that the separation has been bad for both, though the political genius of the people is such as to get tolerable results from a bad machine. I do not believe that an independent Executive in India will be any safeguard either for British sovereignty or against Indian folly. Should it acquire the mind of an alien body in authority checking and watching the Legislatures, nothing but trouble is ahead of it ; should it set itself up as an authority equivalent to the Legislature, even if it avoids racial distinctions, trouble is ahead of it. I fear it will be impossible for an independent



Executive to avoid being mixed up with the oppositions of the moment which support it and object to it. In India that is the conflict between bureaucracy and self-government. Therefore, the wisest policy seems to be to place the Executive for the time being midway between the British and the American position. Let it be appointed by the Viceroy or the Governors as the case may be, on the understanding that it includes some of the legislative leaders, and then watch the development of events.

But when it is appointed it ought to be a unity. The proposal in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report that it should consist of two sections, one owing allegiance to the Viceroy and the other looking to the Legislatures for authority, is clumsy and in every sense inexpedient.

The second point is how elections are to be conducted, and what is to be represented in the Legislatures. With that I have dealt in a previous chapter, and so pass on to the third and fourth points which should be considered together—the relation of the Provincial Legislatures to the Delhi Legislature, and the powers they are to exercise: in other words, what type of unity should the Indian Government show?

Again one very properly thinks first of all of traditional conditions, and here India presents the curious spectacle of an extreme development of local autonomy in villages and an equally strong central authority for financial purposes in particular. In later days the bureaucracy has developed masterful centralising tendencies which one hears adversely criticised in every Province. This cannot be avoided whilst the strongest members of the Civil Service gravitate to Delhi, and the India Office and Secretary of State invariably support the Viceroy and his Executive—always known and thought of as “the Government of India”—in any disputes with Local Governments as to policy. The Report of the Decentralisation Commission abounds in evidence of this tendency,<sup>1</sup> and so does the history of Indian administra-

<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, the memorandum complaining of Imperial inter-



tion. Able men do not make good constitutional monarchs, and a representative system in India cannot be based on an efficient bureaucracy.

These currents flowing towards Delhi will be checked, however, by representative government, and others will begin to flow. There is, for instance, a very marked Madras, Bombay, Bengal patriotism which, founding itself upon history, shows itself in literature, speech, institutions, and administration. Even the Imperial Civil Service is divided into somewhat secure watertight Provincial compartments, and representative government will undoubtedly demand a firm Provincial foundation. This will be strengthened if more heads of Provinces are sent out from home.<sup>1</sup>

Still, no consideration can obscure the fundamental fact that British administration has made India, and not the Provinces, its centre, that the Indian political mind has grown into the same way of thinking, and that therefore the powers of Provincial Legislatures will have to be delegated from the Imperial authority. That must be the principle. It is indeed the existing Constitution, the position of Provincial Governments being that, with the concurrence of the Imperial Government, they exercise power to do anything not specifically withheld from them.<sup>2</sup> How much and what

ference addressed to the Decentralisation Commission by the Bombay Government (*Report*, vol. viii., Cd. 4367 (1908), Appendix ii., pp. 229, etc.). The Decentralisation Commission has detailed the means by which the Central Government has acquired authority over the Provincial Governments as follows: Financial rules, restrictions and conditions, the growth of powers to check administration either by specifically granted legal powers or by administrative encroachments, the power to sanction Provincial legislation, the passing of resolutions directing Provincial Governments, specific instructions, the right to listen to appeal by persons against the acts of Provincial Governments.

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in 1877 Lord Lytton found great difficulty in persuading the Duke of Buckingham, then Governor of Madras, to adopt a famine policy, as he was unable "to force upon the Madras Government advice which it will neither invite nor accept."

<sup>2</sup> Madras, Bombay, and Bengal, being Presidency Governments, have inherited some authority from the old Company administration, and have slightly more power than the other Provincial Governments.

is to be delegated is a question for consideration, and raises nothing but matters of judgment and expediency, and the same is true of the amount of "concurrence" that should be required. Local Government and municipal affairs, education, a limited amount of financial independence must assuredly be amongst the transferred powers. But the complicated and somewhat pettifogging network of entanglements and checks proposed by the Montagu-Chelmsford Report ought not to be considered. Far better is it that the powers delegated should, to begin with, be strictly limited in extent than that they should be wide and hampered in their exercise, because by the one plan they can be extended as a natural process upon experience; by the other, the Imperial authorities are being endowed with new powers of control and continued in old ones which, if effective, will be justified and therefore continued, but if not effective will be irksome and lead to trouble and division between the foreign and the Indian administrations.

British policy in India has acquired the reputation of withholding with one hand what it gives with the other. One hears in India a universal complaint that we deny to the heart what we offer to the ear. Our fault has been to give with reserve. It is a bad policy. We must give what we do give without reserve. If we cannot give much, nevertheless let us give it and let further gifts be dependent upon the way in which previous ones are used. This is true particularly as regards finance. The Imperial Legislature must protect itself by securing first claims upon such income as the Land Tax, Customs duties, and so on; it must also retain powers to co-ordinate Provincial finance in such a way that poor Provinces may not be hampered by their poverty. But, these safeguards laid down, the responsibility of providing a Provincial Budget can be safely left, and ought properly to be left, to the Provincial Legislatures, though I think a very useful end would be served if all the Provincial Budgets were made the subject of discussion at an all-India financial

conference held each year before the Budgets are presented to the Legislatures for consideration. These matters, however, relate to the art of government rather than to the system.

Here the question of checks has to be considered. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report finds these in Viceroy, Governors, and Executives. In no more inappropriate direction can checks be looked for. Of course veto and suspension must be powers held in reserve by Viceroy and Governors, but these cannot be the habitually used parts of the mechanism of government. The check must be within the representative system itself, and in India there should be no difficulty in devising this. The Provincial Legislatures are in direct touch with electing bodies which are to be the best representatives of Indian thought and need that can be devised. But what of the Imperial Legislature? No direct election is possible for it. I believe that the bulk of its members should be elected by the Provincial Legislatures as the American Senate used to be elected, with, at first, a limited number of members nominated to represent interests that are common to India. If the expert bureaucrat can point out the comparative inferiority of such a body, the reply is both easy and conclusive. We are now definitely encouraging the development of self-government and we must make a beginning, and in doing so we recognise quite frankly to ourselves that we cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. This body, in addition to its Imperial work, should have the power of suspending Provincial legislation referred to it by the Governor or Viceroy in Council. Nothing of any grievous importance could get over such a check, provided we can convince these Councils of their responsibility. There might be a special Committee of the Imperial Legislature to consider Provincial Legislature, or other means might be devised to make the responsibility real. But again that belongs to the art of government, and I am most concerned here with its principles.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE

IF the Viceroy is the ceremonial symbol of the British Crown in India, it is the Collector who is the seat of authority so far as the mass of the people is concerned. He is the great sahib whose nod is to be obeyed, who gives and withholds, who taxes and administers justice, before whom all the great people of the village—bunyas and policemen, headmen and accountants, bow. He is the mighty one to whom the most flowery language and ornate titles apply. In fact in his care are the people of India. He, or those who obey him, orders the life of the people, and next to the Creator and the laws of nature, he comes in the hierarchy of arbitrary powers. Those above him are too remote from the life of the people to be anything but indefinite gleams, those below him are outwardly and visibly his servants.

He is successor to the clerks sent out by the Company to manage the factories, and his predecessors made enormous fortunes by private trade and brought the word "Nabob," which was applied to them, into disrepute. When Clive tried to purge him of corruption he objected, and revolted against the interference with his power and privileges, and the most kindly of his critics have a suspicion that prestige and privilege have not ceased to influence him perhaps a little too much since. His latest manifesto against the Montagu-Chelmsford Report is evidence that that tradition has not died down yet. The title of "Collector" which he holds at one stage of his service links him up with Warren Hastings, who appointed him when the Company undertook the collection of revenue



in Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, and also embodies the characteristic of Indian administration that it is based historically on fiscal responsibilities.

He is being shorn of some of his authority perhaps. In the old days he ruled everything, but now there is subdivision of power. The Forests, the Public Works Department, and so on, have been taken from him, and he sometimes complains on that account. Some people also want to take from him his judicial authority on the ground that it is bad constitutional practice to unite judicial with executive power. This he resents still more. He comes of an official ancestry which was indeed absolute. He lives in a society in which his office concentrates in itself all the regal functions of the district, and be it remembered that the area of an Indian District of average size is 4,430 square miles.

He originated, as I have said, in 1772 when Warren Hastings, having to face the double problem of collecting revenue and of organising some proper system for the administration of justice in Bengal, appointed District Collectors for that double purpose. The constitutional objection to the union of these two functions in one officer was at once taken, and Warren Hastings accepted its validity and separated them. Then came difficulties. The courts were used against the revenue authority, and the complementary functions became antagonistic. Whatever the theory might be, the Executive, put in the position of being the foreign administrator of Bengal, was compelled to secure some uniformity of will between itself and the judiciary, and when Lord Cornwallis went out as Governor-General in 1786 he retraced the second step of Warren Hastings and restored the Collector to his double authority as chief magistrate and revenue official. As chief magistrate he is responsible for the order of his District and supervises the work of its courts even if he does not do much magisterial work himself; but, being responsible for the order and peace of his District, he is in command of the police and manages the jails. Though

the creation of separate departments has relieved him of direct responsibility for Forest, Public Works, Sanitation, Education, and, to some extent, jail administration, his peculiar position as executive head of the District keeps him in touch with all these. On his way up through the Service he determines the land assessment, and when on that work he lives in the Districts and mixes freely with the people if he is a wise man. This is one of the great attractions of his life. He keeps an eye—and a hand—on municipal and local government institutions and is, as a rule, chairman of the District Board which maintains roads, public buildings, and so on. He is the eye of the Government and its tongue. He has to keep his finger on the pulse of his District, and nothing of any importance is supposed to happen without his knowledge. A sparrow ought not to fall without the incident coming to his ears. He manages estates, compiles returns of prices and produce, adjudicates on rent, makes loans. Upon him the burdens of famine relief fall. I have attended a conference on famine measures and by the end of the day found the Collector to be an unemployment committee, a president of the Board of Trade, a railway director, a Minister of Labour, an engineer. If he has a difficult District—say, one where Hindus and Mohammedans do not get on very well together—he requires to be a man of unusual tact, influence, and resource. At best, he is apt to be overwhelmed in an oppressive network of details and overborne by endless perplexities and ceaseless cares. Should famine or plague descend on him, the torrents of adversity fall upon him and day and night are as one to him. If he gets irritable, if he becomes a cynic and takes to the philosophy that all life is drudgery, and no drudgery rewarded, who can blame him? In old days this life was toned by some freedom. He could do things off his own bat. He was more of the people, he chose consoling wives from them, he was isolated, he was anything but a clerk; but now there is a string about his leg which is frequently pulled, he is becoming more and more

a reporting agent, his desk work is greatly on the increase, the drudgery gets harder. He has to combine the qualities of a great politician with the patience and abilities of a first-rate clerk, and he finds it difficult to do so.

I have seen him in the steaming heat of a Lower Bengal District sitting hour by hour at his desk reducing the bulk of great files piled in front of him, not one of which contained matters that would awaken his jaded mind to a living interest, whilst on his walls were the mouldy stains of the terrible damp of the season of rain. I have been with him in camp, and have seen the same thing, files, files, files. I have looked on whilst local magnates, district boards, deputations of all kinds, the aggrieved, the suppliant, the office seeker, came to see him. I have felt pleased to drag him away for an hour's change in the forest, or some temple, or for a walk before darkness (knowing, perhaps, he would have to suffer for it), and whilst a recipient of his generous (his generosity often made me ashamed) hospitality I have wasted his time (in the hope that I was really not wasting it) by leading his thoughts away from his drudgery. The District Officer is indeed the tortoise which supports the elephant upon which Indian government rests.

He probably comes of a family that has been connected with India for generations, or India and the Indian Civil Service allured him. Heaven pity him if he came here because he had to eat bread and could not get the post he wanted at home. I fancy that the best men came out under the enchantment of India and the Service. They were tested by a stiff examination, but for the rest they were thrown upon chance. The restless mind of man has always been hankering for a better test than written answers to questions which can be crammed—questions which ingenious professional crammers who charge high fees can often anticipate. There have been suggestions that moral character, physique, personal address, athletic records, captaincies of school teams, education at a public school, attendance at residential colleges, should be



valued and the marks awarded added to those won on examination. The fact is that the real intention of these schemes is to make the Service select rather than efficient, and a study of the Indian Civil Service List shows that nothing is an improvement on the test of ability and application imposed by a competitive examination. It is essential that any test applied to applicants for such posts as those of the Indian Civil Service should be uniform, and these character tests are capricious and uncertain, the certificates and records being of unequal value according to the schools to which they refer and the masters and other referees who give them ; they should also be such as every one possessing the qualities which they are supposed to reveal has an equal chance of being able to meet, whereas many admirable men were never school captains, and in early life were deprived of the opportunity of attending certain types of schools (the virtues of which, by the by, are by no means universally accepted) ; further, the qualities tested should not be those which are at varying stages of development in young men of the same age, as, for instance, self-confidence, the finest and best forms of which often show themselves later than the period when men have to undergo the ordeal of competitive examination. Once, when I was pursuing inquiries on this subject in India, I put the question to a head of a Province and two of the admittedly ablest men in the Service of the Province whether they thought they would have done well in any such supplementary system of tests ; and they all agreed they would not, one being quite definite in his opinion that had he been scrutinised for the purpose of discovering signs of these qualities when he passed into the Service, he was so shy and unused to social companionship that he probably would have been rejected. The examination test may not be fully satisfactory. The papers set are too often mere book papers, and too rarely searching tests of original ability and intellectual common sense. In this respect our Civil Service Commissioners have not done their work particularly well. But when improved in



ways that are obvious to any one who studies a series of those papers, they remain the fairest test to the competitors and the most satisfactory to the State.

When the examination has been successfully passed, the future Civilian undergoes a further training at the expense of the State. To this day this does not seem to be satisfactory, and has been frequently changed. Before going to India the Civilian should know something of Indian life and civilisation so as to sharpen his curiosity and enlighten him regarding the people whom he is to help to govern ; he should be taught something impartial about their politics as they will present themselves to him in India, and in his studies he should be protected against the prejudices and errors which will surround him like an atmosphere so soon as he sets foot in India ; he should acquire some knowledge of the classical language of the country both for his use and his culture ; he should be made to master the details of the machinery of government in which he is to find a place. During this stage he should be taught these subjects not as though he were attending a trade school, but as though he were at a university. And yet he should be taken out of an academic atmosphere and taught by his surroundings to acquire the condition of mind of a man who has already gone out into the world. There is far too much of the mere university in this part of the Civilian's training. I say nothing of studies in law and its practice. Only very general principles should be taught during his training. The young Civilian ought not to be put too soon to magisterial duties, and with proper tutelage on the spot he can acquire enough knowledge of law to serve his purpose. If he desires to pursue a career upon the judicial side, he should return to England for detailed training.

When he arrives in India, he is posted to a district for training as an Assistant Collector, and in due course holds a responsible post. Then the world is before him. It is a hard, but by no means an unpleasant one if his heart is

in it. He is a great man, he has power, there are prizes for the winning, his pay is certainly not mean. As self-government develops he will enjoy more and more the delightful stimulus of the statesman; he has many of those difficulties to surmount which call for good judgment and bring their rewards of satisfaction to the able man. His work is not to be compared for a moment in its interest and variety to that of a Government office at home. If he wants routine he should stay at home; if he wants life he should go to India—making sure first of all that India calls him, and also making sure that he now understands that a still greater change is impending which will rob the Service of its characteristics of a dominating governing authority.

But the Indian Civil Service is more than a collection of individuals. It is a bureaucracy with a corporate life, a machine, a free masonry. It moulds the raw recruit into its own image. It has to work as a whole. When communication was difficult and Indian conditions resisted centralisation, the individual had freer play. He was a human being in touch with human beings, but, though that may still be retained, too many officers become wheels in a mechanism working by rule and regulation. The machine reduces its parts to mechanisms. The tendency has been to centralise the working, and that was the fundamental fault of Lord Curzon's rule. The machine of government has become a thing apart, and by separating itself from the organic life of India it has over-emphasised the fact that India is ruled by foreigners. The evolution of such a system is inevitable. I have described its results in the work of its representatives. Secretariats become all-powerful; not a sparrow falls but is recorded, reported, and re-recorded, docketed, initialed, and minuted; not a suggestion emanates from below but is regarded with suspicion or hostility as something of a foreign origin; not a thing is done without involving the whole machine in the doing of it. Then, it is the Government on one side, and the people on the other. Such

is both the mechanism and the psychology of the Service, and the one cannot be separated from the other. All this is unhealthy, is bad government, cannot last. It must end both in a revolutionary decentralisation and in a much closer association of the people with the government.

One of the great problems of the Civil Service is how far and upon what conditions the Indian should be employed in it. To the Indian, the Royal Proclamation of 1858 is a kind of Magna Charta, a Bill of Rights. He is never tired of quoting the pledge of the Queen: "And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge." As early as 1833 a clause was inserted in the Government of India Act providing that no native shall be debarred from any office solely on account of his "religion, place of birth, descent, or colour." But twenty years later, when Parliament again reviewed the government of the Company, it was found that the clause had been a dead letter, and that the Company intended that it should so remain. John Bright said:<sup>1</sup> "From that time to this no person in India has been so employed who might not have been equally employed before that clause was enacted; and . . . it is clear that this most objectionable and most offensive state of things is to continue."

The Act of 1853 imposed competitive examination as the way of entry to the Civil Service, and an attempt was then made to have examinations in India simultaneously with those held in England. There was an interesting debate on the subject opened by Mr. Rich.<sup>2</sup> The proposal was supported by Lord Stanley, Mr. Bright, and others, but failed to carry. When after the Mutiny the Government passed to

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 127, p. 1184, June 3rd.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 129, July 22nd and July 25th, 1853.



the Crown, the Secretary of State appointed a Committee to inquire into the subject of the employment of Indians, and, having decided that they should be employed "to as large an extent as possible consistently with the maintenance of British supremacy," it pointed out that, though there was no legal bar, "practically, however, they are excluded," owing to "the difficulties opposed to a native leaving India and residing in England for a time." The Committee had "no hesitation" in recommending simultaneous examinations. The Civil Service Commissioners concurred and did "not anticipate much difficulty in arranging for this." But nothing was done, and this report of 1860 seems to have dropped out of the records of the Government of India and has not been reproduced amongst the papers that have been published officially on the subject.

Meanwhile the subordinate or Uncovenanted<sup>1</sup> Service was being recruited by Indians, though in 1870 the Duke of Argyll, then Secretary of State for India, complained in a dispatch that the superior appointments in that Service were being filled by Englishmen. In 1870 an Act was passed requiring the Governor-General to frame regulations by which Indians who had not passed an examination might be put into the Covenanted Service. But the Government of India would not move. Reminded again and again by the Secretary of State of the provision of the Act, it took four years to respond, and when the regulations were sent to London for approval they were found "to place too narrow a construction upon the statute." In a note written by Lord Lytton on

<sup>1</sup> The Services became known as Covenanted and Uncovenanted, because the higher posts were reserved to the Indian Civil Service by statute (1861), or were the subject of a covenant. The Uncovenanted Service ranged from Deputy Collectors and Extra Assistant Commissioners down to Tahsildars and Myooks, and on the judicial side included subordinate Judges and Munsifs. A Service with such an inferior bottom was bound to be degraded. As the result of the recommendations of the Public Service Commission of 1886-87 the Uncovenanted Service was classed as the Provincial Service, to which were assigned the superior subordinate posts and the subordinate Service, and the Covenanted Service became the Indian Civil Service proper.



May 30th, 1878, to a disgraceful dispatch sent by the Government of India that year proposing to close the Covenanted Service to Indians, the whole of this sorry story is reviewed, and this is the summary of it: "Since I am writing confidentially I do not hesitate to say that both the Government of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear." The dispatch was rejected with something like contemptuous anger.

A puny system of scholarships for Indians to come and study in England was established and then withdrawn, and in 1879 rules were at last framed, and upon them the "Statutory" section of the Service was built up, beginning in 1880. A proportion of new appointments not to exceed one-fifth was to be filled by Indians nominated by the Governor-General in Council from nominations made by the local governments, a condition being that the nominees were to be of good family and social standing. Altogether 69 places were filled in this way; but as the men had not the educational qualifications or the general ability to perform their tasks, the scheme was foredoomed to failure and fell into disfavour. It had never met with the approval of Indians, and it strengthened the opposition—as in some quarters it was meant to do—of the British elements to any infusion of Indians into the higher Service.

The Public Service Commission of 1886–87 opened the next phase. It recommended that Indians who had done specially good work in the lower Service should be promoted to posts in the higher Service. In consequence of this, and after the usual delay which has caused so much damage in India, rules were issued in 1892 by which certain posts held by the superior Service were listed and were made available for promotions from below. There are now 61 such posts for the whole of India. This is known as the system of "listed posts." Men thus promoted do not enter the higher Service, but

simply hold these posts and are paid salaries equal to two-thirds paid to Europeans.

This is the system in force at the moment of writing, and the history of its growth reflects no credit on the Government of India. It has yielded better results than the "Statutory" Service, but it is far from satisfactory and the Commission which reported in 1917 proposed to abolish it. Its great drawbacks are: (1) the men appointed to listed posts do not pass into the higher Service, and therefore always remain inferior; (2) the men appointed are too old to fill their places with energy; (3) the men have fallen into the grooves of the Provincial Service and have lost self-confidence and initiative. In a sentence, it is not for the good of the State, and it will not be accepted as satisfactory by Indians, that posts in the higher Service should be set aside as prizes for old men. Every man in the higher Service must feel himself to be a member of the Service, must feel in himself its spirit, and must be held by his colleagues on terms of trust and equality.

Meanwhile the English door was being used by some Indians who were fortunate enough to be able to come to England and attend an English University. One passed in 1878, the second in 1882, two in 1885; from 1888 there has been an unbroken stream, the largest number passing in any one year being seven in 1899.

The position may be seen in this way. In 1913 there were 2,501 posts under the Indian administration carrying a salary of over 800 rupees per month; 2,153 were held by Europeans, 106 by Anglo-Indians, 242 by Indians including Hindus and Mohammedans. There were 11,064 posts with salaries of 200 rupees per month and upwards, 4,898 being held by Europeans and 1,593 by Anglo-Indians. Or again, the position may be stated thus: of the 200-rupees posts and upwards 42 per cent. were held by people of unmixed Asiatic descent; of those of 500 rupees and upwards only 19 per cent.; of those of 800 rupees and upwards only 10 per cent.; of those of 1,000 rupees and upwards only 8 per cent. It

is true that these percentages are increasing, but the pace is terribly slow. On the assumption that teaching the Indian how to govern himself is an essential part of our work in India, the record I have just been giving is more than disappointing.

The Provincial Service is now practically altogether in the hands of Indians and Anglo-Indians, Europeans being appointed only with the sanction of the Government of India, and all the recruitment is made in India. In 1913 only 56 Europeans were in this Service of 2,432 posts, 54 in the Executive and two in the Judicial Branch. None were employed in Madras, the United Provinces, and Punjab, one judicial officer in Bombay, eleven executive officers in Bengal, fifteen in Bihar and Orissa, nineteen on the Executive and one on the Judicial branches in Burma, three executive officers in the Central Provinces and six in Assam. As Deputy Collectors and Assistant Judges these men do the greater part of the detailed work of Indian administration; and though everything they do is subject to supervision, they require to be men of ability and probity. A race could not carry these responsibilities if it were fit to do that and nothing more. Many of these men put young into the superior Service would work in that Service as well as they do in the lower one.

We have to admit without any cavil that the Government of India has been opposed to the general employment of Indians. The politicians at home have regarded India as a political problem, the Governors in India have regarded it as an administrative one. They have been unwilling to surrender or share authority, and so when Acts and resolutions have been passed by Parliament liberalising the administration of India, their application has been delayed and their intention twisted. Nothing has ever been fully carried out. The Act of 1833 was not carried out at all; the Proclamation of 1858 when translated into Government of India resolutions was pruned until it was a mere stump; the Act of 1870 lay useless for nine years, and then when the Govern-



ment of India was forced to act upon it, it was not faithfully carried out; the Report of the Commission of 1887 was not touched for three years and then the Government used it to limit the privileges which previous discarded statutes and dispatches had given to the Indians. In this resistance we see several influences. There is the very human one of a Service knit together in race and dignity unwilling to welcome aliens in custom, habit, and race into its midst, even if these aliens are the natives of the governed country; there is the feeling that efficiency will suffer if the Service is not kept as it is, and the unsatisfactory methods hitherto taken to put Indians into it gave that feeling some appearance of reason; there is the assumption that whilst the British occupation of India remains, a nucleus of British administrators is necessary, and that the best form for that nucleus is a comparatively small superior Service retaining in its hands District supervision and legislative authority.

With the House of Commons at home passing liberal measures and the Indians welcoming these manifestations as the dawning of new days, the Government in India could not state definitely and emphatically what its feelings were, except in dispatches more or less private like that of 1878 to which Lord Lytton wrote the angry note from which I have quoted. All it could do was to delay and prune. But its great bulwark was the English examination, not only its place, but its nature. It would be a long time before Indians would or could go to England in sufficient numbers to take many places in the examinations, and the examination itself was so Western, more particularly in its languages, whether classical or modern, and Oxford so dominated the minds of the Civil Service Commissioners, as was seen by the scheme of marking the examination papers, that nothing but a wholesale breakdown in British intellect or a complete destruction of the attractions of the Indian Service to university graduates could enable Indian candidates to secure very many places. As India had become the possession of the Indian Civil Service,



so Oxford endeavoured to secure the Indian Civil Service as its perquisite.

To put an end to this and to make Government pledges effective, Indians asked for simultaneous examinations. At first there was little formulated opposition. The expedient was supported by an official committee in 1860, the House of Commons passed a resolution in favour of it in 1893, and this resolution was accepted on behalf of the Secretary of State.<sup>1</sup> Then the opposition was formulated. It had a great margin of trivialities. On account of the variation of time, it was impossible to have the examinations simultaneous, and examination papers could be sent by cable from where they were first disclosed, and candidates in, say, Calcutta could see them before going inside the examination rooms ! And so on. Two objections, however, were not absurd. If there were an open competition in India there would be no guarantee that any British candidates would be returned at all, and the British nucleus would disappear ; further, the examination would not be good for Indian education, as its influence in India would be to make university education conform to the Civil Service examination papers. The second objection was, curiously enough, urged by men interested in British Universities, though Oxford in particular has always been anxious to have these Civil Service examinations attached to itself. The theory of the examination is that the papers should test a good university education, and that view is shared by the Civil Service Commissioners. That is forgotten by those who make this objection. It was also the view expressed in the famous memorandum drawn up by the Committee which sat in 1845, of which Lord Macaulay was chairman and Dr. Jowett a member. If for British purposes this examination is a test of sound university education, why is its influence in India to be to degrade university education ? Our educationalists who are also interested in Indian education cannot have the argument both ways. If they vary it, as

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, 17, p. 1035, 1893.

they sometimes do, and say that examinations are now an unhealthy influence in Indian education, they may be right, but that does not justify the continuation of a system of admission into the Civil Service which is unfair to India and defeats the declared purpose of Acts, resolutions, and dispatches passed and written by Parliament and the Secretary of State for nearly three-quarters of a century. It may, and does, suggest that there is something wrong with Indian education, which, however, is to be put right only by a change in the spirit of the system.

The first argument is the one of real substance. But it has been met by Indians, like Mr. Naoroji, who propose that limits should be fixed to the recruitment in India, and the Commission which reported in 1917 unanimously recommended that nine places should be competed for in India every year. Thus the principle underlying simultaneous examinations is conceded, and the educational argument against them is set aside. Nine may not be a sufficient number, but it may be increased in time, and the English door is still open as well.

The real problem which the recruitment of the Civil Service raises is, must there be a British superior Civil Service if the British connection is to be maintained? and the answer will depend largely upon what view one takes of the nature of that connection. If one assumes not only that India is to remain subject to the British Crown, but subject to British administrative authority, one must conclude that there ought to be a sufficient number of British in the higher governing posts to give direction and tone to the whole of the Government. Comparatively few are required to do this, but that few must be maintained at all costs. If one, however, assumes that India may remain subject to the British Crown and yet govern itself with a genius and efficiency all its own, the importance of the British nucleus in the Civil Service is not so great. British Governors will then remain as in the

Dominions, but their position will be ceremonial and symbolic rather than administrative.

This divergence of view is only the indication of a deeper divergence. Are we to look upon India as a nation which is to be moulded, as the generations pass, in Western or in Indian moulds? Is the transformation of India into a Britain the service we are rendering mankind by our work there? Or can we not render a better one, and regard our mission in India as being one for the liberation of the Indian genius? We found it crushed by its own errors and tyrannies, weakness and disorders; we came to restore authority to it, to give it back its rights and power of self-government. That certainly was our ideal during most of last century. If that be our ideal still, it is best to let India gain power first of all in Legislatures and gradually supply her own administrators. For the Legislature is the will, the administration the handmaiden of the will. The administrator is the expert who, taking his instructions from the will, works out details and applications efficiently. The faculty to administer well comes after that of forming opinion and expressing it. So that in the interests of self-government in India, the country would be well advised to keep its legislative powers ahead of its administrative authority, for it is more important for it that efficient Europeans should supervise the edicts of an Indian public opinion than that Indian administrators should carry out British instructions. That thought, I believe, should guide India in determining the general features of the reform it is now to demand.

In any event we are coming very near to the limit to which it is safe to reduce the British nucleus if we have no intention of welcoming India as an Indian State under the Crown. And that at once suggests difficulties. The nucleus must be one of exceptionally good men, for its number is of less importance than its qualities. There never has been any marvel in the fact that a thousand or two able and well-trained Britishers, glorified by prestige and backed by a



powerful hidden authority, were sufficient to administer the public affairs of hundreds of millions of Indians. The marvel would have been had it been otherwise.

But India is losing some of its glamour. The discontent of the Service is known in Oxford colleges, and educational changes have obstructed the flow of the vigorous youths who used to go from Scotland and Ireland, and were amongst the sturdiest pillars of the Service. Some of the complaints are peevish and do a great injustice to the Service, but others are well founded. The material rewards of the Indian Service are not so good as they were; and with the opening up of other attractive avenues of employment to university men, India has to meet a keener competition. This is affecting all the Services, but conspicuously so the Civil and Medical Departments. The blunder committed by the Civil Service Commissioners in merging the Home and Indian examinations has added to the difficulties of the situation, and men are now going out who openly confess that they are taking India because their place in the competition did not allow them to choose the posts they coveted at home. This has not gone very far yet, and can be stopped if wisely dealt with. But the canker is there, and once such evil influences come into play their effects suddenly become critical. I am not sure but that they have become critical on the medical side.

This is a problem of the first consequence to those who can see no chance of safeguarding Imperial interests in India except by a British bureaucracy. They must do something to maintain the threatened standard of Indian recruitment. They must face the problem of pay, of privileges, of pensions, and they must in this way produce a material attraction for service in India which will eclipse similar attractions at home or elsewhere. They must supplement this with social attractions which will restore some of the vanished satisfaction and contentment to the hearts of Indian Civilians. Above all, they must produce in the minds of those from whom they wish to draw their candidates an interest in India, so



that they may hear the call of India. Upon this depends the decision as to the age at which they should catch their men. University convenience is not good enough. That must be studied in relation to the aim.

In making these schemes and devising these plans for a better recruitment, they would be under no delusion as to what they are up against. They will have to meet the Indian opposition which will grow, which has been greatly increased by the events and emotions of the war, to an administrative British bureaucracy, to the great increase in the expense of Indian government; they will have to surmount the dangers of an increasing political and legislative power possessed by Indians whilst they rigidly maintain a British-manned administration; they will have to remember that the economic value of the men they want is likely to be very high in other walks of life, and that by offering them greater rewards they are only putting up the market against themselves. We have now reached a point when foresight and farsight are essential if we are to do justice to ourselves in India. The war compels us to survey the future and revise our policy with remote but inevitable ends in view, and whatever conclusions the governing authorities may adopt, let them be definite, let them be systematised, and let them take into account all the factors.

For myself, I have come to take the other view. I believe that the Imperial connection can be kept by a self-governing India enjoying, with the appropriate modifications, Dominion privileges of Home Rule. I believe our ancestors were wise when they decided that if Indians showed themselves capable of filling the administrative posts of their own Government, no obstacle should be put in their way. Mere polished efficiency is not the end of our custodianship of India; a *pax Britannica* is not the end; the end is Indian life, abundant, responsible, spontaneous.

I was a member of a Commission which inquired into the Public Services and made certain recommendations on the subject, but the new conditions created by the war made

the report obsolete before it was published. Our conception of the functions of the Service must now be altered. I then thought of the possibilities of twenty years from 1914. The twenty years have gone and twenty have been added to them. The Indian Civil Service must conform far more to the conditions and status of the Home Service, and must no longer be recruited for the higher posts of the Executive. In the circumstances it is far better to institute simultaneous examinations in India and Great Britain than pursue the scheme of electing proportions here and there, for the reduced attractions of the Indian Service to Britons may be expected to reduce the quality of the men recruited here. On this subject, the discussion and proposals in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report are altogether perfunctory and inadequate. If that Report becomes the basis of legislation, the contention of the Indian Civil Service that its status will be revolutionised is unquestionably true. That Service will no longer rule India, and the posts from which it now does the ruling will be taken from it or will lose their prestige. It may be consulted, but it will not decide. It will act not of its own will, but through that of bodies elected in India; and as this is not the time for confused systems and undefined authority, with whatever regret and misgiving we may contemplate the change, the change is inevitable. The seat of authority in India is being removed from the Civil Service to the Legislature, and we must build up the system of government accordingly. Wisdom compels us to see not very far off the end of the Civil Service as we have known it, and that being so it also compels us to begin without delay to create a new service which will carry us through the transition stage from a British to an Indian administration. To Indianise the Civil Service has become necessary.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE NATIVE STATES

THE Native State is a sovereignty in which the Crown shares to a varying extent, but in every case the foreign relations of the State are the concern of the British Government. Also the internal administration of the State would at once become a matter of Imperial interference were it to be considered subversive to the interests of either British or native subjects, or were its tranquillity to be threatened either by bad government or turbulence. It cannot make war; it cannot bind itself to its neighbours. If its subjects are aggrieved against a foreign power, that is a matter for the British Government, not for the Native State. The protecting authority both of the subjects of Native States abroad and of those of Foreign States in the Native States is the British Government. The degree to which the Native sovereignty extends has been determined by no general principle, but by historical accident, the size and importance of the States themselves, the terms of the treaties made between the Imperial Government and the Native rulers, other agreements and usages.

The Nizam of Hyderabad is the first of these rulers and exercises the maximum of power. He issues his own coinage, has a free hand as to taxation, and has absolute powers of life and death. Some of the rulers of the smaller States have little more than minor judicial powers and immunity from British taxation.

As a symbol and embodiment of British sovereignty and its responsibilities, there are political officers and residents in every Native State, and cantonments of troops are stationed



at suitable places. These complicated relationships also necessitate judicial arrangements which vary considerably from State to State. On the other hand, the rulers have accepted obligations to provide a certain force of troops which could be used for purposes of Imperial defence. Before the war broke out there were about 22,000 of these troops and they were placed unreservedly at the disposal of the Imperial authorities.

Of these States there are nearly 700, they occupy territory of 675,267 square miles, or well over one-third of the whole country, and their population is 70,000,000 or about two-ninths of the total for India. Their population is in no way different to that of British India ; they are simply the remnants of the estates held by the rulers which for one reason or another we attached without annexing as we spread from the sea to the mountain barriers. Our friends we protected, our enemies we absorbed. The Dalhousie policy of annexation was heroic, but really neither side wanted it. It was in the interest of the Native ruler to make peace with us ; it was in our interest to leave him responsible for the administration of his State, provided he did not conspire against us and did his work of ruling tolerably well. We kept as a power in the background, and well in the shade out of sight. We had our representatives at the courts, and they were consulted by and advised the princes, reported to the Government and took instructions from it. But the dignity of the princes was maintained and their responsibility was real, even when they were too lazy and too self-indulgent to exercise it. That was a definite policy, and so, when the Queen assumed the title of Empress of India, Mr. Gladstone was particularly anxious to receive from Mr. Disraeli a pledge that the new regal dignity would in no way detract from that of the Indian princes, and the pledge was given.

The Indian prince did not always respond satisfactorily to the new conditions of luxurious security in which he found himself under our wing. Nothing drew from him energy

and activity. He was secure in his State, he had an ample income, he had prestige and authority amongst his subjects, he had a bad upbringing and a deteriorated and deteriorating *entourage*, he had no traditions of public usefulness to spur him. He did not belong as a rule to a very old family, and his State had come to him by conquest or favour. His conception of himself was that of a tax-receiver surrounded by plotters and schemers, by flatterers and traitors; that of a god ministered to by hangers-on. He could not understand that there was any difference between the income of his State and his own. It was his private possession managed by agents. His court was too often a maze of crookedness and sensuousness, in which women generally played the leading part, and through which he sank into physical, mental, and moral decay. The peace and protection of Britain brought the Native State to the condition of a fever-stricken morass where diseased nature was prolific and gorgeous to the eye, but rotten at the core and feeding on corruption. And British interests and influence not infrequently increased the corruption. Such was the parlous transition stage through which the Native State had to pass whilst its rulers were being taught their duties and responsibilities as the heads of their people and the vassals of British rule, and whilst we were deciding whether we should take it from them or teach them better ways.

Recently there has been a great change for the better. British policy has been directed to pressing the Chief to make himself responsible for the government of his State, and a new type of Native ruler is arising. In him there is still a love of the pomp and luxury of the past, but his mind has been moulded and his outlook changed by contact with the education of the West and its conceptions of the good ruler and good government. The Chiefs' Colleges at Ajmeer, Rajkot, Indore and Lahore have played their part (though on the whole a disappointing one), but of much more importance has been the general political atmosphere of India, the known views of the British Government, the personal contact between Delhi

and the Native rulers. Whoever looks at the reports of administration issued from such States as those of Hyderabad, Mysore and Gwalior will see on every page, not only the stamp of the West, but the hand and mind of the East.

Saving for a short relapse during Lord Curzon's viceroyalty, the Native rulers are being encouraged more and more to do their own work, in accordance with the spirit of the British sovereignty no doubt, but as people sharing that spirit and believing in its wisdom. In this connection, Lord Minto said some pacificatory things to undo the evil that Lord Curzon had left behind him, but his successor Lord Hardinge widened the Minto declarations into principles of policy. At Jodhpur, for instance, when, as almost one of the last acts of his rule, he invested the Maharaja of Jodhpur with ruling powers, he said: "We have recognised that if a State is to be ruled justly and well, and to be a source of real help to the British Empire, it is only through the ruler himself supported by his sardars and people that these results can be obtained. Irsome restrictions on the exercise of sovereign powers are apt to chafe and irritate a proud and sensitive spirit, with results disastrous not only to the ruler and his people, but also to the Empire at large. We have, therefore, made it our aim to cultivate close and friendly relations with the ruling princes, to show by every means that we trust them and look on them as helpers and colleagues in the great task of Imperial rule, and so to foster in them a spirit of responsibility and pride in their work which no external supervision can produce. Trust begets trust and I rejoice to say that in my dealings with the ruling princes in India I have never found my confidence misplaced."

These are wise words, and they indicate the policy which has been pursued quite definitely since Lord Curzon left India. One of the reasons why Lord Hardinge was attracted to Delhi as his capital and why in the building of the new Imperial city he urged plans and expenditure on what seemed to be a scale of only too characteristically oriental extrava-



gance, was that he might be nearer to the Native States and thus be more frequently in their minds, and that the seat of government might appeal to them as truly Indian in its grandeur. One has only to look at a political map of India to see how Delhi lies in the midst of what is still native in India, and that when the British Government went there it seemed to cut itself off from the alien settlements of British race and merge itself in the dreams, in the ruins, in the traditions that to the great mass of the people are India. It may be that the bureaucracy will defy the dreams, spoil the ruins, and enslave the traditions; but this in any event is certain, that, supposing by some miracle there were established in India an Indian Government sensitive to the thoughts of the people and wishful to regenerate them, it could not make the great coast cities its home: from its very nature it would seek prestige, authority, and appropriateness in Delhi or in some similar place where the spirit of India still broods—though it be amongst tombs.

The problem presented by these States is not an easy one to settle. Some, like Hyderabad, are as large as a European State; some, like Mysore and Baroda, are almost as enlightened in their government; some, like Gwalior, show a complete identification of ruler and people on a liberal basis equal to that of not a few Western Governments; some, like the Rajput States, are far more ancient than any existing European monarchy and have preserved a dignity and a pride which bankrupt those of any reigning European house.

Obviously, whoever tries to piece into a system the whole administration of India must begin his work by endeavouring not only to preserve these States, but to make their autonomy more complete. The very widespread British opinion that the Native State is a backward and inefficient Government is sheer vanity. In Hyderabad, a Mohammedan shows how to reconcile Mohammedan and Hindu loyalty, and in Gwalior a Hindu ruler does the same; in Baroda, Bikanir, Travancore, and elsewhere, we have magnificent pioneering

work done in education ; in Mysore, experiments in education and popular government have outstripped our own. Some have more enlightened marriage laws, some have gone farther than we have in protecting the judiciary from undue executive influence, some have shown us the way to establish a flexible system of Income Tax. All teach us wisdom in land taxation, the patronage of the arts (whatever their mistakes may be, they have not made the unpardonably fatal one of crushing or starving out the arts), industrial progress. None of any consequence are opposed to political progress (except in one instance or two where the rulers are old, and I know of no case where their successors will be adverse to change)—certainly none will resist a good British example in this respect ; and the most enlightened of them very justly complain that we have held them back. All, within recent years, have shown great advances in the purity of their administration. It is certainly a profound mistake to identify the survival of a gorgeous ceremony and a court ritual of dazzling trappings with the politics of the times when personal power and tyrannical wills expressed themselves in that way. This truth was borne in upon me with great force one day whilst staying at one of these courts. I had seen much of the ruler and we had discussed every Western political movement from women's suffrage to Socialism. He was interested in them all and held opinions upon them which showed that none of them were new to him. But one fine morning there was a State ceremony. The velvets and the jewels, the gold and the silks, the scimitars and the headgear were brought out, and the mind which was discussing Socialism the night before was animating a body clothed in the pomp of ancient days, ancient authority, and ancient ideas. This is the incongruity of India, but let no cynical or superficial mind imagine that the incongruity goes very far below the surface.

The head of the Native State is just as likely to be progressive nowadays as the British bureaucracy, but, quite apart from that, the advantages of indigenous government are so

apparent, and the freedom and confidence which indigenous administration enjoys—things, for instance, can be done by Indian rulers which would not be tolerated at the hands of a foreign authority—are so useful that not only ought the Native State to be preserved, but, were that at all possible, it ought to be multiplied, and, subject to their administration responding in a general way to the changes that must be made in Indian administration, the existing States should have more powers of self-government. In any event, far greater care should be taken in selecting Residents—those representatives of the Imperial authority who reside in the capital cities of these States and act as tutors and guardians, as well as mere advisers, to their Chiefs. These men too often are devoid of the qualities which fit them for the delicate and difficult office which they fill, and their influence tends to stifle both initiative and sense of responsibility in Chiefs who perhaps at best have but little of either, but who under certain types of Residents lose what little they have.<sup>1</sup>

It is quite absurd to say that self-government is incompatible with the status of Chiefs in these States in view of the oft-expressed views or practices of the rulers of Mysore, Baroda, Alwar, and others. Indeed, Indian self-government would receive the hearty support of these personages. What, then, ought to be the relation between these States and the Indian Government, between the Chiefs and their Durbars and Councils on the one hand, and the Viceroy and the Indian Legislature on the other ?

The States are at different levels of political evolution, and that for the moment bars a uniform treatment. But considering how much the Indian Legislature influences Native State policy—the States, for instance, have no tariff liberty, no separate system of posts and telegraphs,

<sup>1</sup> "The attitude of the political officer, while ordinarily deferential in form (though even that is sometimes lacking), is the attitude of a servant who directs his nominal master, haughty, polite, impertinent, and ironical" (Chailley, *Problems of British India*, p. 259).



and so on—the States should be represented, at any rate for advisory purposes, on the Imperial Indian Legislature as federated communities, and, where they have Legislatures and Councils themselves, these Legislatures or Councils should select the representatives.

It would be a mistake to put the Chiefs into organic relations with the Indian Government. That could only be done by either lowering their dignity or confusing the nature of the Government. Rather, the Chiefs together with the Governors of Provinces should meet in consultative Council, say once a year, to discuss matters of common interest and co-ordinate policy, so far as that is advisable, but not to come to any binding decisions. Their meeting should be like that of the crowned heads of Europe, and every encouragement should be given to individual Chiefs to meet and consult at other times. This should be done without waiting for representations on the Imperial Legislative Council, as that for the moment may not be practical. Full recognition should be given to these rulers in all matters of Imperial concern, and their status of dignity and responsibility should be put in an unquestionable place in the minds of the Indian Government.

Two important matters arise, however, in connection with these proposals. The first is, that they modify the theory that these States secure their independence only by refraining from interfering in the affairs of British India ; the second is a presupposition that the States are sufficiently large and important to justify the distinction proposed for them and their Chiefs.

The first point is really not one of substance. The Government of India cannot do anything without influencing these States, and it is far better to recognise the fact formally. The Imperial Legislature will not deal with strictly Provincial matters, and the presence upon it of several State representatives will increase rather than confuse its efficiency for the work it has to do, even if it may be desirable to withhold the power of voting on certain classes of subjects from these

representatives. It would be impracticable for each State to be represented, but the States could form an electoral college for the choice of a certain number of representatives for the life of each Legislature.

The second point is one of greater difficulty. The status of States now varies enormously. Some have direct access to the Government of India, some have not; the relations of some are with the Indian, of others with the Provincial, Government; some are clearly independent, others are as clearly not; there is the Old India party and the New India party; Chiefs who still live in the Middle Ages and Chiefs up to date in habits, dress, religion, and political ideas; there is Udaipur and Baroda, there is the State of Nablia and the State of Gwalior; there are rulers educated at English Universities, and rulers educated in the female quarters. Obviously there must be a classification and grading of States. This, indeed, ought to be made in any event, and should be done by a Committee upon which the States are themselves represented—by a Committee which will be directed to pursue the federal idea and to improve the status of States, wherever that is possible. When this is done—and not until this is done—many of the fears which disturb the minds of the ruling Chiefs that they are to lose their authority, that the strained interpretations put upon treaties by the Indian Government when dealing with weak rulers may be extended to all, and similar suspicions which are now perfectly justified, will be removed for good. The continued liberty of the Native State and of its ruler does not depend upon a loose connection, but upon a constitutionally defined relationship within a federated India.

## CHAPTER X

### FINANCIAL POLICY

#### I—TARIFFS

WHEN one tries to imagine what would be the policy of an India in the government of which ascertainable public opinion would have substantially more influence than it has now, one of the first subjects which presses for attention is finance and fiscal policy, and in this connection we must remember what the nature of the representative authority will be for some time to come. Its most prominent features and interests will be nationalist and capitalist. The Universities and Colleges and the greater Municipalities that will be represented will give tone to the Legislatures, and the class from which candidates will have to be drawn will be in the main that of lawyers and business men. In the very first Legislatures provision should be made for the representation of working-class, cultivator, and co-operative interests, but I do not see how, to begin with at any rate, this can be very effective. It will in time gather authority as it goes through its apprenticeship, but in the meantime it will find some of the main lines of Indian political development set for it by the classes prepared straight away to make full use in their own interests of their political powers. The new India will be started by nationalist and commercial minds, and so far as fiscal policy is concerned they will agree. They will follow precisely the same line of action as our own Dominions have done. The economics of the nationalist are those of self-supply and foreign exclusion ; the taxation policy of the commercial classes is that revenue should be found as much as possible



by customs imposts which, whilst protecting Indian industry and securing for it high profits, will at the same time supply revenue and ease the burden of income tax. Indeed, as has been quite evident in recent financial debates in the Legislative Council, these interests rather shirk the duty of imposing direct taxation, are inclined to resort to loans, and, like a French Budget Committee, fail in courage to make ends meet.

The system of Indian taxation is an inheritance from past political conditions modified by the methods of the British rulers. The Hindu conception of the King's revenue was that it should be levied from the income of his subjects in varying proportions, and in fines and fees. A Collector-General supervised the tax gathering, and he appointed local representatives. The foundation of the system is to be found in the Laws of Manu. Traders' profits are to be taxed. One-fiftieth part of cattle, one-eighth of grain (or a sixth or twelfth), one-sixth of trees, ghee, honey, fruits, hides, earthen vessels, belong to the king. And so on. At its best, the Hindu system was excellent and surprisingly modern in its theory; at its worst, in practice, the tax-gatherer levied what he could and practised corruption and oppression. The barbarous splendour of the Courts which Sir Thomas Roe<sup>1</sup> and other visitors have described was the result of tribute and taxation outside the bounds of tax-gathering, and was made possible owing to the theory that State revenue was the personal possession of the ruler.

When the Company came, its first income was profit from trade, but by and by it received political revenues.<sup>2</sup> At first it collected these revenues in the name of the Indian ruler. "They held their territories as vassals of the throne of Delhi; they raised their revenues as collectors appointed by the Imperial Commission; their public seal was inscribed with

<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, Hakluyt Society (series ii. vols. i. and ii.).

<sup>2</sup> The turning-point came in 1765 when Clive procured a grant of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa from Shah Alam.

the Imperial titles ; and their mint struck only the Imperial coin." The inevitable evil of such a system is the dark thread which runs through the story of Warren Hastings and Nuncomar, and tarnishes the biographies of the great men and the history of the great deeds which meet us at the beginning of our Indian connection. The income of the State was to yield profit to the shareholders, and Warren Hastings, " with an empty treasury, with an unpaid army, with his own salary often in arrears, with deficient crops, with Government tenants often running away, was called upon to remit home another half-million without fail." <sup>1</sup>

For a time there was a confused jumble between the financial policy of the Company as a trading concern and as a political State. It sacrificed national interests in order to make profits. It ordered the ploughing up of fields of poppies when its stock of opium was sufficient and it did not want to depress prices ; at another time, and for the same business reason, it decreed the planting of poppy crops instead of grain. And what was even more fatal to revenue, its servants on the spot traded in their own interest and made fortunes on markets which they manipulated and by bribes which they exacted. Adam Smith's account of the procedure remains the classical criticism of the faults of such a form of government.<sup>2</sup> It is cold ; but the heat which would arise from a political condemnation of such a system was blown with hearty good-will into the orations of Burke until they glowed like furnaces. In the end, State revenue had to be separated from trading profits, and this was finally done by the Act of 1813. Twenty years later the Company was compelled to end its trading transactions altogether.

But in the Budget, as elsewhere, the Company and the systems to which it had become heir still survive. If we take a Financial Statement of the Government of India we can see

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's *Warren Hastings*.

<sup>2</sup> *Wealth of Nations*, bk. iv, chap. vii.

how the revenue is derived and shall appreciate the problems connected with it. That of 1915-16 showed a revenue of £54,855,000, £21,000,000 of which came from the land ; £3,000,000 from salt ; £5,600,000 from Customs ; £8,000,000 from Excise ; £2,000,000 from Income Tax ; and £5,000,000 from the Posts and Telegraphs, Railways and Canals. On the Expenditure side out of a total of £56,000,000, £22,000,000 was for military purposes and £24,500,000 for the cost of government, including the collection of revenue.

Passing the Land Revenue for the moment, three things strike one in this statement of revenue—the Salt Tax, the Income Tax, and the Customs. The Salt Tax has long been regarded as a blemish on our Indian fiscal system. It is light (when it was lowest, from 1907, it stood at 1 rupee per 82 $\frac{2}{3}$  lb. and meant a tax of about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per head per annum), but still it is no mean proportion of the income of Indian families. Though salt taxation was known in India before, its present history dates from the imposition of Clive and Warren Hastings when the Company was hard up. It has been retained on the ground that it is well that every Indian should feel the cost of government. As a matter of fact he feels nothing of the kind : he just knows that the price of his salt is high, though salt is a necessity. But supposing there was something in this notion of making everybody feel the cost of administration (and there is nothing), it would only apply to a self-governing people who may rightly be taught the financial consequences of political acts. It requires a highly trained intelligence to decide what are the consequences of political policy and what are not, what consequences are worth bearing and what are not, and so on through many other processes of accurate reasoning. We know in this country what an appeal for reduced rates and taxes generally amounts to. It is as a rule an appeal to personal selfishness and shortsightedness against a wise social policy. If the cost of government were to be made a safeguard against folly, nations would be undone, because bills come after the events and people show less



forethought in reckoning up the cost of great follies than in demanding an estimated cost of cold wisdom.

In India, where the Government is a bureaucracy, even this theoretical justification for the Salt Tax does not exist. If the Indian salt consumer had all the wisdom necessary to come to sound conclusions upon the cost of his government, he has no power to alter it by one farthing. The Salt Tax is exaction and oppression ; and if the people understood it, it would only breed discontent. It is a survival of the general exploitation of India's poverty by a profit-making Company. The argument for its retention illustrates the error so prevalent in India, of assuming that the political wisdom of a Western self-governing State is also political wisdom in an autocratically or bureaucratically governed one, and that a bureaucracy has the same right to impose burdens on a people that a representative Legislature has. The payers of the Salt Tax have no more to say in Indian policy than the man in the moon, and the price of their salt has no more influence on the bureaucracy than the cost of their weddings.

On the other hand there is the Income Tax, levied first of all temporarily to relieve the charges of the Mutiny, but imposed as a regular part of Revenue in 1884. It is the representative of the trade taxes imposed by the Moghuls, so that those not engaged in agriculture should not elude the tax collector altogether. Before the war, it stood at about 6½*d.* in the £, but in 1916 it was raised to from 7½*d.* to 1*s.* 3*d.* by a sliding scale determined by the amount of income. The yield of the tax has risen steadily, but that it is evaded in a wholesale way is shown not only by the small sum which it produces, but by the further fact that the yield from Government salaries is about one-fifth<sup>1</sup> of the total. The import of private merchandise by sea has risen from £64,500,000 in 1904-5 to £122,000,000 in 1912-13, the exports from £105,000,000 to £166,000,000 ; bank deposits have doubled ; the paid-up capital in Joint Stock Companies registered in the country

<sup>1</sup> 1914-15.

has increased from £26,782,000 to £50,698,000. But during the same time the yield of the Income Tax has increased from £1,260,000 to £1,936,000. It is true that the accumulation of wealth which these figures indicate has been confined to a comparatively small section of the people, but that is all the more reason for a much greater State revenue being obtained from it. This is one of the pressing financial problems of India: how to get at the wealth of the richer people and how to make them yield a juster amount to the national revenue. Indian revenues have always been taken far too much from the poor, and the rich have got off far too lightly. It took us a long time here to stop up the back doors by which Income Tax was evaded, and we have not completely succeeded yet. But in India we have hardly begun the task and are using its difficulties as an excuse why we should not begin.

In the mind of the Indian manufacturer, the alternative to a proper Income Tax is a tax upon imports. If Indian commercial opinion determined fiscal policy, India would be a highly protected State, and this would come about from the ordinary human motives of doing one's best for one's own advantage. This is specially the case with the cotton trade. But financial interest is here mixed up with nationalism as it is in Ireland. The Indian is told that in days gone by England deliberately ruined his manufactures in order to find a market for its own, and up to 1918 he has had "proof" of his opinions in the arrangement by which, "in the interest of Lancashire," his native products have had to pay an excise duty equivalent to the customs duty imposed upon cotton imports.

For a long time the fiscal policy of India has been the subject of conflicts between the Government—sometimes one is not very sure whether it was the Home or the Indian Government—and the manufacturing and nationalist sections of Indian opinion. The contest centred round cotton imports. Cotton is the one great machine industry in Indian hands, jute being under British control. But Lancashire has important interests

in the Indian open door. From 1904-5 to 1913-14 inclusive, the value of the manufactured cotton goods, including twist and yarn, sent to India from the United Kingdom was no less than £288,000,000 ; in the first of those years it was £23,700,000 and in the last £39,800,000.<sup>1</sup> The Home Government could not, in its political interests, afford to neglect a stake such as that which these figures indicate, and it happened to believe in principles of international trade which coincided with Lancashire's interests. As is usual, when principles and interests coincide the world accepts the more ungenerous explanation that the interests are the real explanation of conduct.

When cotton production began to be of some importance in India, about 1870, Lancashire cotton manufacturers became alarmed lest the 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty they then had to pay<sup>2</sup> might prove to be a protective tax for Indian products ; and they moved at home to get Free Trade principles applied to India. Free Trade held unchallenged sway over the minds of British statesmen at the time, and it was not only easy for them to listen to Lancashire, but to do what it wanted in the honest belief that it was not to Lancashire they were giving ear, but to the best interests of India itself. To offer any explanation except the latter one was described by Lord Hartington in the House of Commons in 1882 as putting the matter "on a false issue." In 1874 the Manchester Chamber of Commerce urged the Indian Secretary to end the duty on cotton goods as it was disadvantageous both to India and Great Britain, and a few months later referred to the competition of Bombay mills that had been started under protection. After an inquiry, the Government

<sup>1</sup> *Statistical Abstract* (1916).

<sup>2</sup> In 1858 when the Crown became responsible for the Government of India, a 5 per cent. *ad valorem* cotton duty was in existence. This was raised in 1859 to 10 per cent., and reduced again in 1864 to 7½ per cent., and in 1871 to 5 per cent.



decided that 5 per cent. was not a protective duty, and it was right.

In 1878 Indian finances were overhauled, and an attempt was made to differentiate between raw and manufactured articles, between duties which were convenient forms of indirect taxation upon consumers and those which acted as protection to native industries. The customs were pruned and engrafted by Free Trade minds, and those kinds of Lancashire cotton which had to meet the competition of Indian mills were admitted free—not only, be it repeated, to give Lancashire a chance on Indian markets, but in the interests of Indian consumers.

The circumstances made it difficult for the Indian manufacturers to see the beneficence of the change, and it was warmly criticised in India, the majority of the Viceroy's Council protesting against the influence which Lancashire was having on Indian policy. Indeed, that side of the Free Trade mind of Lancashire appeared to be hypocritical, and the later events in the story of cotton duties have only added to the Indian doubts. In 1882 the cotton duties were completely removed, but when the exchange value of the rupee fell, and the Indian exchequer was again in great straits, the old 5 per cent. on imports had to be reimposed in 1894–5. Lancashire became active<sup>1</sup> and in response to its agitation some details of the Budget were altered, involving a loss of revenue to India, and an arrangement came to by which an excise duty similar to the customs duty had to be paid. That has been the rule since. But the exigencies of war finance compelled the Government to reopen the question in 1917, when, partly owing to the desire of the Tariff Reform members of the Government

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hansard, September 3rd, 1895. Philip Stanhope: "If there was any thing more patent than another in the late appeal to the Constituencies, it was the stern resolve of the people of Lancashire that this matter should not be allowed to sleep." Lord Salisbury's despatch of 1871 on the subject, together with this debate embody the facts and the arguments of the controversy.

to get a contribution made to their policy, partly to unwillingness to offend the nationalist interests of India during the war, the House of Commons sanctioned an arrangement by which British cotton imports should pay in India a duty of 4 per cent. for which there should be no countervailing excise.

This is only a small beginning in the destruction of a system which the Indian manufacturer has never accepted. It has always seemed to him that, under the guise of Free Trade, we have been upholding the old pernicious practice of mercantilism and have been using dependencies for the purpose of providing markets for our goods. The nationalist movement took the same view. It felt quite accurately that the financial policy of India was devised to suit British ideas and sometimes British interests, that in any event it was not always even the policy of the Indian Government, to say nothing of India itself, but was sent out from home.

When Lord Morley increased the representative character of the Indian Councils, the old position could not be maintained for long. Indian financial policy had to be devised in India, even if, in the opinion of the Home Government, India was wandering from the paths of economic wisdom, and Lancashire interests were being damaged. So no one was very much surprised to find that the Finance member, in introducing his second war Budget (that for 1916-17), announced the inevitable departure. It was not to be taken then because when the war was over the whole question of fiscal relationships for the Empire itself, and for it in relation to the world, would have to be considered, but a pledge was given that the old policy was dead and that Indian opinion would influence Indian fiscal arrangements in a way which had hitherto been denied to it.<sup>1</sup>

By the following year India had offered to us a contribution

<sup>1</sup> The words used by Lord Hardinge in his Budget speech to the Imperial Council just before he left India were: "We are all unanimous, I think, as to what the best interests of India in connection with the cotton duties may be, and I regard this declaration that I and my Government have been

of £100,000,000 to our war expenses, and part of the financial scheme by which it was to be raised proposed an extra 4 per cent. duty on imported cotton. Lancashire challenged the departure, but was beaten,<sup>1</sup> and I do not believe that the decision then taken can ever be reversed.

A revision of the fiscal policy of India will be one of the first acts of a Legislature representative of active nationalist opinion, and the result will be a tariff in the interests of capital. Cotton will be protected first of all on account of its financial influence, and the 4 per cent. difference will probably be increased. In a normal year the import of manufactured textiles will be little short of £50,000,000 in value at pre-war prices. This is the highest value of any group of imports. The next is that of iron and steel and metals, which may be put down at £15,000,000, most of which would be subject to a protective duty. Then there is a considerable miscellany of manufactures, varying from matches to umbrellas, in which Indian manufacturers are interested and which is not likely to escape the eye of Tariff Reformers. On the other hand, India is in a specially strong position for imposing export duties on some of its raw products like jute, which it will send abroad to the value—pre-war rates—of perhaps £20,000,000 per annum. There is undoubtedly opportunity here for raising a considerable revenue, for easing the burdens of capital, for giving an artificial impetus to industry, for meeting the demands of nationalist economics and swadeshi.

Such a policy will provide some money for the Exchequer, but not nearly enough to meet the increased expenditure which India will have to face as the result of the programmes of representative Legislatures. It will not be to India's permanent advantage, and I am sure if the excessive influence

authorised to make in the name of his Majesty's Government as a far-reaching pronouncement of statesmanship and full of hope and promise, implying as it does the possibility, or I may even say the probability, of a broad re-consideration of the fiscal interests of India from a new angle of vision,"

<sup>1</sup> Hansard, March 14th, 1917.



of the rich classes of Indians engaged in commerce were counterbalanced by the political activity of the common people, the Indian demands for a tariff, especially on cotton, would not be so conspicuous as they are. One thing is quite evident. A tariff will not re-establish the old hand industry of India nor help to revive village handicrafts. Factory and machine production, native to India itself, will throttle them as effectively as that of Lancashire and Birmingham has done in the past. Protection is asked for the Indian capitalist of Bombay, Ahmedabad, Calcutta, not for the artisan of the mofussil. Its one certain effect will be to increase the pace by which India is to become a great manufacturing nation, and it ought not to be granted without concurrent legislation protecting the wage-earners both in their factory and in their housing conditions. Whoever has visited the working-class districts of Bombay, with their squalid overcrowding, their filthy dens of disease, their insanitary puddles and stinks, will pause before welcoming or aiding any rapid strengthening of the economic influences which maintain them, until, at any rate, a public opinion and body of legislation have been created to protect the people whose labours will be necessary for the new factories. Social and labour legislation is so backward in India that any policy of rapid economic development can only enrich a few at the cost of the very lives of the masses. India ought to prepare itself by dealing with the human products of the factory system before the Government abandons itself to a policy whose sole object is to extend factories as though they were a sufficient end in themselves.

This policy of protection must therefore be considered in relation to the industrial development of India and its bearing on politics. To imagine the backward Indian labourers becoming a conscious regiment in a class war, seems to be one of the vainest dreams in which a Western mind can indulge. But I sometimes wonder if it be so very vain after all. In the first place, the development of factory industry in India has created a landless and homeless proletariat unmatched

by the same economic class in any other capitalist community ; and to imagine that this class is to be kept out, or can be kept out, of Indian politics is far more vain than to dream of its developing a politics on Western lines. Further than that, the wage-earners have shown a willingness to respond to Trade Union methods ; they are forming industrial associations and have engaged in strikes ; some of the social reform movements conducted by Indian intellectuals definitely try to establish Trade Unions and preach ideas familiar to us in connection with Trade Union propaganda. A capitalist fiscal policy will not only give this movement a great impetus as it did in Japan, but in India will not be able to suppress the movement, as was done in Japan, by legislation. As yet, the true proletarian type of wage-earner, uprooted from his village and broken away from the organisation of Indian society, is but insignificant. It is growing, however, and I believe that it will organise itself rapidly on the general lines of the proletarian classes of other capitalist countries. So soon as it becomes politically conscious, there are no other lines upon which it can organise itself ; self-government will make it politically conscious ; a capitalist fiscal policy will draw from it a programme and a policy which will reproduce amidst the wage-earning population of India all the features of what is known in Socialist quarters here as the class struggle, and will create, if it is not granted to begin with, effective representation on the Legislatures of proletarian opinion and deprive the capitalist and professional sections of a monopoly of power. To-day, economic political opinion concerns itself with tariffs ; under self-government it will also concern itself with social reform.

## CHAPTER XI

### FINANCIAL POLICY (*continued*)

#### II—THE LAND TAX

IN all discussions of Indian Revenue, the Land Tax has occupied a special place. The tax, like so many other features of Indian government, has a past dating long before the Company sent a servant to help it to make profits out of India. The grain heaps of the people had to pay tribute to the needs of the king, and the contribution was made in kind. Akbar levied it in cash; and during the last century, when British financial administrators were importing order and certainty into the Indian revenue, the method of fixing the land tribute was the subject of much consideration when every local custom was taken into account—by men, however, who unfortunately did not understand them.

To-day two methods are in force. One recognises the ownership of landlords—typified best in the Cornwallis settlement of Bengal, commonly known as the “Permanent Settlement”; the other proceeds upon the assumption that the land is State property for which the cultivator pays rent. The Land Tax of the former method is a true tax, though a most unscientific one; the Land Tax of the latter is not a tax at all, but a rent, and its amount is not the subject of legislative enactment like an Income Tax or a Customs Duty, but of valuation and arbitration.

When the Company became responsible for the administration of Bengal, the Land Tax was subject to an annual revision, no system of imposition was fixed, and the chaos and uncertainty were made greater by the fact that between



the Government and the people was a set of tax farmers who could impose their burdens pretty much as they wished. The Court of Directors determined to end this, and, going back to the Akbar method, decreed a ten years' settlement. When the period ended, Lord Cornwallis reported that the whole of the facts of the assessment had been ascertained, and that it would be best then to fix a perpetual and unvarying impost. That was done, the effect being that people who had been tax farmers became landowners, and cultivators who had been in reality landowners paying Crown dues became landlord tenants. The reason why this change, with all its unfortunate errors, was made was that Lord Cornwallis and his investigators knew next to nothing of the customs and systems with which they were dealing, and only understood the English land system with which most of them were directly connected. They read the Bengal position as though Bengal were Sussex or Yorkshire, and produced the "Permanent Settlement" and the Zemindar landowner. In time, the security of tenure which occupiers enjoyed under the Government was lost. They were exposed to the will and whim of landowners, and the condition of Bengal ryots and Bengal rents became such that a series of Land Acts had to be passed protecting the cultivator in the enjoyment of the soil and the reward of his labour, and undoing to some extent what Lord Cornwallis had done in his ignorance. Meanwhile, the revenue ceased to enjoy any part of the increasing rents, and the settled tax ceased to bear any relation to the capacity of the land to bear a share of the cost of government. The Bengal Zemindar became enormously wealthy on income which ought to have been kept by the State, and when the Income Tax was introduced he escaped it on the ground that his income was derived from the land and was presumably mulcted already by the tax which he paid. This system holds good in "about five-sixths of the present Province of Bengal,<sup>1</sup> one-eighth of Assam, one-tenth of the United

<sup>1</sup> Since then Bengal has been reportioned.

Provinces, and a quarter of Madras, representing in all about one-fifth of the area of British India.”<sup>1</sup>

Viewed from any standpoint except that of the perhaps privileged Zemindar, the Bengal system is unjust. It is, however, as I have said, in accord with the notions of our English landed governing class, and in 1862 the Secretary of State decided that it should be made universal in India. But the practical difficulties in the way were so great, the sacrifice of State rights and the handing over to private pockets as a gift what belonged to the Indian nation were so obvious, that a combination of simple justice and common sense thwarted the Secretary of State, and in 1883 Lord Kimberley declared against the extension of the Bengal system. Ever since then enlightened opinion has rejected it, and were it possible it should be undone. It is not now possible, but Zemindar incomes in “Permanent Settlement” districts ought to be subject to Income Tax.

There is another great objection to freeing the land of India and allowing it to be regarded as personal possession. The cultivator has always been the prey of the moneylender, and though the development of co-operative Credit Societies is reducing this evil rather substantially, it is still in existence. The history of the Punjab land legislation is an admirable illustration of how this works, though the case of the Deccan cultivators might equally well be cited.

When the Punjab was annexed, the lands were given back to the peasants and a very low Land Tax was fixed. But, largely owing to the rigidity of the annual payment and the happy-go-lucky disposition of the peasant—no doubt the product of generations of unsettlement—the moneylender had to come in to help over the lean years. His grip tightened year by year, until, in 1894, when an inquiry was held in one district, 20 per cent. of the cultivated areas had either been sold or was seriously encumbered with debt, and in other districts the percentage was even higher. Between

<sup>1</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. iv. p. 229.

1892 and 1896, over 50,000 acres had been sold to moneylenders and as much to non-peasant purchasers, and these sales had grown to 120,000 acres in 1899-1900, whilst nearly 300,000 acres were under mortgage. Thus the agricultural basis of the Punjab was being undermined. To accelerate this, the moneylender was adopting various slim devices such as that of "conditional sale," by which he became possessor of the mortgaged land were interest not paid within a specified time. The conditions of the loans were in most cases extortionate to the highest degree, and could not possibly be fulfilled. But the Courts enforced them until public opinion was roused and the Government had to decide, in 1900, to prevent the sale of agriculturalists' land to non-agriculturalists. Into the merits of the law I do not enter; upon the extraordinary agitation against it I make no reflections. I draw attention to the fact that land in India enfranchised from Government control tends to pass into the hands of moneylenders, lawyers, non-agriculturalists, or to become so weighted by mortgages that the cultivator sinks to slavery, and I put that down as the explanation of how widely spread in certain classes is a demand for a landlord system and an opposition to land legislation. On the other hand, the Government no doubt has its own selfish ends to promote. But whoever speaks in the interest of the cultivator, whatever his views may be upon the weight of the land tax, will not propose to alter the system of land tenure or leave the cultivator exposed to moneylenders and forced sales.

Under the system of temporary settlement the tax is usually fixed for a period which may be as much as thirty years, with variations in the payments should crop conditions necessitate abatements.<sup>1</sup> The cultivator is then a permanent tenant of the Crown and his right of occupancy is both heritable and transferable.

The assessment requires a careful cadastral survey, and a

<sup>1</sup> As the system of assessment gets more complete, seasonal variations in the impost become more practicable and in fact more common.



map is kept in each village showing in detail the extent and boundary of each field. A list is also kept of those who have rights over each field, indicating the person responsible for paying the tax and containing in some provinces, such as Burma, the most complete information regarding tenures, rights, and mortgages. This record has to be constantly kept up to date.

The proportion of produce taken varies. Obviously where irrigation is efficient the proportion is higher than where it is not, for the rent of fertile lands is not only higher than that of poor soil, but represents a higher percentage of the yield. In estimating the tax which the land ought to bear, not only is the cost of cultivation taken into account, but that of marketing, the productivity of the soil, the effect of existing settlements, the value of tenants' improvements, the character of the seasons, and so on, and it is upon the net value thus arrived at that the tax proportion is fixed. Throughout the whole of last century there has been a steady lowering of the proportion of the net product taken. Thus in Orissa in 1822, 83·3 per cent. was taken; in 1833 it fell to 70–75 per cent.; in 1840 to 65; in 1916 it was 54.<sup>1</sup> Fifty per cent. may be taken to be the general rule. A mathematical standard is the basis, but it is, or ought to be, applied with "judgment and sound discretion." Schemes are also in operation preventing sudden increases as would take place upon reassessment after a long period of years when the value of productivity is increasing.

The sums levied in this way appear to be colossal, but the principle is sound, and its apparent oppressiveness disappears when the real economic nature of the impost is understood. It represents precisely what land reformers in this country and elsewhere are now endeavouring to persuade our governments to institute, not because they wish to oppress the cultivator, but because they wish to help him, and because they believe that they can prove that a system of private ownership of

<sup>1</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, vol. iv. p. 221.

rents is bad for tenants and evil for the State. It provides revenue which, if justly assessed, does not enhance prices nor affect the standard of living. The same amount of revenue raised in any other way would add to the poverty of the people.

In any event this is clear. The "permanent settlement" of Bengal and elsewhere was unjust to the general Indian tax-payer and was no benefit to the cultivator as such. The condition of things which compelled the Government to pass the Bengal Tenancy Acts, in order to save the ryot from robbery and ruin, are an unanswerable argument against those who wish us to believe that the Land Tax is the cause of the poverty of the Indian cultivator. A rack rent is an oppressive rent, but a true rent is not oppressive, and it had always better be a State revenue than a private income.

Indian Nationalist opinion has never taken kindly to this rent tax, and if it had a chance it would probably try to modify it. The motive for this is complicated, and self- and class-interest are not altogether absent. But apart from that, the tax, when considered erroneously and simply as a tax, does look oppressive, and in a complete indictment of British administration and exploitation it does look formidable. I defend it stoutly in principle, but I think it has been raised too often oppressively, and that is where the Nationalist attack cannot be rebutted. The error lies here. In theory, the tax is a rent; in practice, a rent should be fixed on an open market by competition between competitors of a decent standard of living and in relation to the amount, above that standard, the land competed for will yield; in other words, it should be assessed with that standard as its first charge. The habit of the Government, very often under the pressure of an all too limited exchequer, has been to exact from the cultivator the uttermost farthing, over and above a standard of life which has been much too low. In theory again, the annual fixed revenue was supposed to be an average in which both good and bad years were computed; but whilst this

assumed that the cultivator would average his own annual expenditure, as a matter of fact he did not do so, and in bad years he did not go to his savings, but to the moneylender. Over-assessment and the rigidity of the payments, therefore, have undoubtedly tended to impoverish the people, and a system of revenue collection thoroughly sound in theory, and meeting the requirements of unassailable economic doctrine, has, in practice, become a grievous method of oppression and the subject of formidable attack. The Government has only illustrated the dictum that the owner of rents tends to become the possessor of rack rents, and in this respect India shows results remarkably similar to those of Ireland. The power to exact rent has been used in both countries to keep down standards of living, and the ryot and the cottar have been doomed to illustrate how economic law is no respecter of persons. The Punjab and Connemara have been suffering from the same disease. The Indian Government and Irish absentee landlords have been proving that there are no races and creeds in economic law.

Against two forms of complaint we must be specially wary. We hear much of the excessive "taxation" of India, and we are frequently asked to condemn the way in which the Land Tax is levied because its total yield steadily increases. The substance of both complaints needs to be critically scrutinised.

Taxation averages are always misleading, and in the case of India, as I have already shown, large sums which are really rent (probably £21,000,000 out of a total of £54,855,000) are included in what is called Indian "taxation." Again, a Land Revenue yield, as it is a rent, ought to increase automatically as cultivation widens and improves. If, in this country, a proportion of rent had found its way regularly into the Treasury, an increase in the yield year by year would have been a measure of national prosperity, not of excessive Government imposts. The real point of attack upon the levy of the Land Revenue is not that it exists, but that it is more than a fair rent and that it has been levied in such a way as to prevent a steady



heightening of the standards of life which would have tended to absorb a part of the increasing productivity into the wages and salaries of cultivators.

It is often said, and as a statement of historical fact it is true, that our destruction of social custom in India by the imposition of Western legal methods marked the beginning of a new severity of oppression on the part of moneylenders, lawyers, and other classes useful within well-defined limits, but predatory when they overpass those limits. It was alleged, for instance, during the agitation against the Punjab Land Bill, that the banya, as the beast of prey, was created by English methods. We destroyed the old psychology and relationships, and we put in their place the new legal relations between man and man ; we destroyed the community and put in its place the law. So, it is argued that if we had some kind of Permanent Settlement of the Land Tax, the moneylender and the lawyer will return to their old functions. That will never happen again. The change has taken place, and the only way to meet its evils is to carry the system to its logical conclusion with the appropriate legal safeguards under whose shelter a new moral and commercial relationship will grow up. So, if, as regards the Land Revenue, self-government were to follow the lines of Nationalism in opposition (a consistency which the history of political parties shows to be anything but inevitable), India would be put more completely than ever under the hand of the exploiter, and the Indian cultivator would be turned more rapidly than ever into a landless man driven into the plague-infested chawls of Bombay and Calcutta and compelled to swell the ranks of a proletariat whose industrial conditions cannot be matched for evil amongst the most miserable wage-earners in any quarter of the globe.

This, however, must be said in extenuation of the attitude which some of the leading Nationalists have taken up on this question. The details of the Bills proposed have often been bad—those of the Punjab Bill certainly were ; they all em-

bodied ideas of social relationship alien to the Indian mind ; they were the proposals of Governments who were held responsible for the evils they proposed to cure. If the Nationalists' opposition has been tinged with some shade of class and personal interest, some desire to leave the land and the cultivator open to capture, it is to be hoped that when they have to settle with themselves the moral obligations of responsibility in a way they have not yet had to do, nothing but the sternest considerations of public policy will determine their decisions, and that they will regard consistency as all honest men do—as a very valuable possession, but not quite so valuable as to be bought by the sacrifice of justice.

If the financial policy of self-government would make the Land Revenue a real rent on the principles I have indicated, it would be all to the good ; if it is to set up a new claim to proprietorship it will be all to the bad. The following points may be stated categorically as they indicate the policy which ought to be pursued :

1. The Permanent Settlement typified in Bengal was wrong not only politically, but economically, because it was neither a State rent nor had it the advantages of a flexible tax.

2. The periodic valuation of land for the purpose of fixing a State rent-tax is sound economically, because it aims at securing for the State values which have not been created by the labour of the cultivator. The tax, however, should never exceed an economic rent.

3. Whilst mistaken impositions may impoverish the cultivator, that is not a necessary consequence of the Land Tax ; and the cultivator is more impoverished under the Bengal system unless it is guarded by a code of land legislation, and even then his economic position as a tenant is not so good as it is when he is an occupier under the State.

4. The Land Tax requires elasticity of imposition and its changes should be gradual.

5. Irrigation justifies a larger percentage of the net produce being taken, because it is not what is taken, but what

is left, which determines whether the cultivator is justly done by.

6. The gross yield of the Land Tax ought to increase as the agricultural prosperity of India advances, and as prices rise.

7. The economic condition of India is such that rent paid into the public funds is necessary unless taxation of an oppressive kind is to be imposed on consumers and paid from the incomes (in the form of high prices) of the very poorest grades of the people.



## CHAPTER XII

### FINANCIAL POLICY (*continued*)

#### III—EXPENDITURE

TURNING to the Expenditure side of the Indian Budget, the first set of figures which arrests our attention is the cost of government under the heading of "Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments." This opens up a wide field for consideration. It is an item which rises steadily, for India has by no means produced a complete system of government and for a long time prices have been going up. In 1903-4 it was £10,000,000; in 1913-14 it was £18,000,000, not including pensions nor superannuation and furlough allowances which added, in the former years, a further sum of £3,300,000 and in the latter, one of £4,000,000. This is a very large item equal to two-fifths of the amount raised by taxation. It must be admitted that the government of India is an expensive affair.

The Indian Civil Service has been regarded for many years as the most attractive of all civilian employment under the Crown. It was something apart in its great distinction and responsibility, and also in its ample remuneration. The time when the nabobs returned gilt with gain, acquired by means which did not bear the clear light of day, to purchase seats in Parliament and dominate a country-side, ended with the trading days of the Company, but the traditions and allurements of power, importance, and wealth of those who governed in the almost mythical land of India lingered. In all soberness salaries were fixed high by the Government when it determined to allow no more perquisites, and when salaries ended

pensions began. Though money has sadly dropped in value both in India and at home, and is still dropping, and though the Indian Civil Service is no longer separated from other services by such a wide gulf as formerly, it is still an expensive service. It costs India much, and its own traditions of expenditure are such that the ample salary has to be scattered by the open hand.

In the early days of the Indian National Congress, one of the most frequently used arguments in favour of more Indians being admitted to the Indian Civil Service was that the British demanded salaries far in excess of Indian standards. I fear the habit of high standards has become so prevalent that this consideration has no longer any influence. When Indians appeared in the higher service of course they were paid the same rates as their British colleagues. The scale was fixed not for the race, but for the office; and by and by when it began to be hinted that the expenses which an Englishman incurred when he helped to govern India were so great that only an imposing salary could meet them, the Indian produced a rival catalogue of his special expenses, such as his enormous family obligations, to prove that he too required a great income. The evidence taken by the Royal Commission on the Public Services is full of this. British standards of pay have undoubtedly become part of the inducements which public service offered to Indians.

What these standards are may be seen by comparing them with similar posts at home. The pay of a civilian member of the Viceroy's Council is £5,336 per annum, whilst that of the Secretary of State for India is £5,000; a member of a Governor's Council gets £4,265, the Minister at the head of one of the minor departments at home gets £2,000; the average pay of a man holding a superior executive post is £2,000, a principal clerk to the Treasury rises to £1,200; a professor in the Indian Educational Service rises to £800 with allowances extra, his work (it varies very much) is done at home for anything between £200 to £500; the Chief Factory Inspector in Bombay

gets £1,200 with allowances, the highest-paid Deputy Chief Inspector at the Home Office rises to £900 ; and so on.

It may be justly said that the expenses of men in India must be greater than are those of the men at home. Our officers have to keep up prestige, which is expensive, and their open-handed hospitality is unmatched anywhere in the world, as every one who has had the privilege of being their guest knows.<sup>1</sup> The nabob was not merely a man who made money, but who spent it, and as some gleam of his glory lingered in the salary when originally fixed, so too it remained in the expenditure which his successor had to maintain. But that only proves that the methods we have adopted to govern the country are necessarily expensive to the people of the country. A foreign Government is always a dear Government—even if it is worth its price.

One simple conclusion, however, ought to be laid down. We should bend our energies to prevent these high standards of pay from becoming more common. Money is not so cheap as it used to be in India, and therefore existing rates of pay may have to be slightly augmented in some cases, but the abundant supply of indigenous ability which is now available ought to be used to keep down unnecessarily high salaries. An economical Government is one of the necessities of a country like India, where practically the whole of the people live at bare subsistence levels. The traditional glamour of the nabob is rather old now, and at no time did it belong to the eternal fitness of things.

Every branch of the public service should have as its standard of pay an Indian and not a foreign level, and the allowances that have to be given to foreign administrators should be liberal, but be regarded as extra, so as not to affect normal scales. The pay we give to our administrators is purely artificial from the point of view of India (whatever it may be

<sup>1</sup> Whoever looks only at the salaries paid does a grave injustice to the officers who receive them, and I wish to make it clear that I have some conception of the expenditure which they have to meet.



from our own). Thus far we have wrought India much harm, and this is a reform which self-government would do well to make.

But the expense of a foreign Government is not only great as regards its salaries, but also great, and far more grievous, as regards its pensions. Upon civil and military pensions alone the Indian tax-payer has to find for claimants living in England something like £3,500,000 to £4,000,000 each year. And these dead charges under a foreign Government are doubly serious, for they are not only drawn from Indian production, but are withdrawn from India itself. The pension paid to a Provincial officer who retires to his native village, or lives in Calcutta or Bombay or Madras, is one thing. The people of India have to find it, but it does not reduce the wealth of India. The pension paid to an Imperial officer who retires to London, or to one of the places where Anglo-Indians gather to wait for death, is a totally different thing. The people of India have to find that too, and it does reduce the wealth of India. It withdraws from a fertilising stream a very considerable amount of necessary water, and means impoverishment.

What I have just written may be taken as a fitting introduction to the more general subject of what is known as "the drain," about which we used to hear more than we have done recently, which used to be the subject of many discussions at the National Congress and of many speeches and pamphlets in this country. To explain and condemn it was the purpose of a book which Mr. Digby, that very devoted friend of Indian reform, wrote in 1901—a book which had considerable influence at the time.<sup>1</sup> The argument is admirably summarised in the evidence which Mr. Naoroji presented to the Welby Commission on Indian Finance (1900). It runs as follows: The British rule India in such a way as to exploit it. A large part of the incomes of the rulers is not spent in India, but in England; pensions are spent in England; taxation is so heavy that it destroys the powers of India to accumulate capital for

<sup>1</sup> "Prosperous" India: A Revelation from Official Records.

itself ; capital comes from England and its profits return to England, so that India does not benefit from its own development ; there is a steady export of raw material from India to pay its debts. Thus there is "a drain" reducing the wealth and capital of the land. Mr. Naoroji was subjected to a severe cross-examination before the Welby Commission, and he did not emerge altogether scathless from the ordeal. But he was not utterly destroyed, and the complaint he was then voicing is far from being silenced. It will have to be re-examined and discussed, and what is substantial and curable in it must be dealt with.

The Indian financial dilemma, so far as the Government is concerned, is this : India needs a greatly increased expenditure upon its own improvement, *e.g.* sanitation and education, but the masses are poor. Taxation can be imposed wisely only upon the difference between the cost of decent living and income, and that margin in India does not exist for nine-tenths of the population.

The official apologists keep reminding us of the low taxation of India, but that has nothing to do with the matter. The question is what is the taxable capacity of the Indian people, and as regards the great mass the answer must be : " Practically nil." Englishmen may be taxed, on the average, £10 a head and Indians only one shilling, and the Indian impost be heavier than the English one. While prosperity is far from general in India, the Indian Government will not be able to raise its income very substantially without lowering the standard of life of the people and crippling the economic life of the country ; and prosperity cannot be widespread if the exported tribute is heavy.

When all is said and done and a balance of advantage and disadvantage struck, I think there can be no doubt that India suffers greatly because so much of its created wealth is spent and fructifies outside itself. Indian exports are not those of the exchange of a free market. To illustrate the point simply : India does not export tables in order to satisfy its needs by

an equivalent import of chairs ; India exports tables in order to pay debts. Now, there are debts and debts. There are debts which fructify and are paid for by a proportion of their own productiveness, but there are debts that are dead weights upon income, and India's debts are betwixt and between these extremes. If these interests, incomes, and pensions were spent in India by way of immediate consumption or were invested as capital for the economic development of the country, the case would not be so bad. It would only amount to an uneconomic diversion of part of the national income. But whilst it is true that the British officials spend liberally in India and necessitate the maintenance of a great staff of people who spend the whole of their lives in the country, the vast mass of that staff is paid little above subsistence rates on the one hand, and, on the other, the export of salaries is very considerable. When considering the Exchange Compensation Allowance, the Government of India assumed that one-half of the salaries up to £1,000 a year was likely to be exported.<sup>1</sup> This is too high a proportion, but it may be put down nearer to one-fourth. We may also assume that all pensions, both civil and military, paid in Great Britain by the Indian Government are spent in Great Britain, and they amount to well over £3,000,000 per annum. This is to all intents and purposes a dead loss to the country. Then there are loans for public works and the great amount of foreign industrial capital the interest on which is exported. This is by no means all a dead loss, but a considerable part of it is. Moreover, the sums paid out of India in this way are increasing. The grand total of the charges upon Indian Revenues paid in England was £20,000,000 per annum at the outbreak of the war ; in 1835 they were £3,000,000 ; in 1850 they were under £3,500,000.

Every debtor country of course complains that it has to pay interest to foreign shareholders, and looks forward to the time—which it often tries to hasten by legislative means—

<sup>1</sup> Resolution, August 18th, 1893.



when it will wipe off its debts and trade on its own capital. But whilst it is a debtor it has no true grievance, unless, being under a foreign authority, that authority deliberately rules it in such a way as to continue it in its position of economic subjection. The very fact that India is so poor and that it is impossible to raise by taxation vast sums to construct public works, which are of pressing importance and are to be immediately productive, like irrigation canals and railways, compels the Indian Government to go upon the London market for loans; and the inability of India to provide the capital and experience for some large industries like jute, at the moment when these industries could be planted in India, opens the door for foreign capital and management. The balance of good in the transaction remains with India. What drawbacks there have been were inherent in the conditions of India, not plotted and planned by an alien Government. Young Australia and the Argentine were in the same position. At the moment this drain—in the main falsely so called in this respect—amounts to about £2,000,000 for interest on Government debt, £9,000,000 for State railway charges, and other smaller sums. The drain from private business is unknown, but the whole transaction, lumped with all the other balances in exchange, is seen in the figures of Indian export and import, which show in money values an adverse balance of from £20,000,000 to £30,000,000. What part of this is a real drain can be decided only after a very patient examination of all the items, some of which, however, are not published. I doubt if it will amount to more than a half.

Even the items must be carefully scrutinised. Take railways as an example. When railway building began in 1850, the State had to make a bad bargain with British capital in order to attract it, and Indian revenues were burdened for many years in consequence. Later on, the State borrowed money itself and constructed its own lines. But, from the borrowed capital, railway and other works were executed which were devised in War Offices and not in counting houses,

and military expenditure became masked as railway development.<sup>1</sup> The matter was repeatedly discussed in the House of Commons when Westminster was more interested in Indian questions than it now appears to be, and the system of borrowing to pay interest on unproductive works was condemned and stopped. But once again a sound financial policy was confronted by Indian limitations, and it was found that if Government had to expand the railway system only from revenue or from Public Works Loans, India would have to wait a long time for necessary railways. Private capitalists were again called in, and Indian capitalists were encouraged to help. The business of the railways is now settling down. India bears a debt of £233,000,000<sup>2</sup> on account of them upon which it makes a net profit of just over £2,000,000.<sup>3</sup> But for the purpose of estimating the drain which has been caused by the methods of railway construction and financing which were adopted, railway figures are exceedingly complicated.

In this vicious spiral of effect becoming cause we must not overlook the fact that the justification for borrowing out of India—namely the lack of capital in India—is, as I have indicated, one of the results of “the drain,” so that it perpetuates the very conditions which keep it going. Nor must it be forgotten from our own national point of view that this tribute, however it may enrich individuals, has an evil economic effect upon the nation, because it is an import for which no corresponding export is sent. Its general effect upon the

<sup>1</sup> Large sections of the railways have, however, been planned for purely civil convenience even from the beginning. This interesting statement, for instance, appeared in *The Wednesday Review* on January 7th, 1914: “The pious pilgrim to Rameswaram may now feel at ease and loll nonchalantly in the railway carriage, unmindful of the sullen silence or the defiant roar of the sea right below his feet. That is a big boon to the pilgrims which they will not fail to appreciate. . . . They can now step into the sea, so to say, straight from the railway train. What the new route means those alone can realise best, and in the recesses of their hearts they will bless the agency which placed within their reach the means of obtaining the salvation of their souls.”

<sup>2</sup> 1914–15.

*Ibid.*

exporting country is described by John Stuart Mill in these words : “ A country which makes regular payments to foreign countries, besides losing what it pays, loses also something more by the less advantageous terms on which it is forced to exchange its production for foreign commodities.”

However views may differ regarding the volume of the drain, it is there, but only in part because of the foreign Government, and certainly not to such an extent as a mere process of subtraction applied to import and export figures would seem to indicate. A more liberal employment of Indians in the public service, a more generous treatment of India by the Imperial Treasury, a greater use of Indians for military purposes, and an international settlement of armament questions will reduce it so far as government charges are concerned. In private business, the establishment of Indian banks and the supply of Indian capital will also reduce it. For this last, two things are essential—industrial co-operation and a readjustment of taxation so that the rich may pay more and the share of the cultivator in his product be increased. The problem of hoarding should be faced, especially by guaranteed savings banks and a direct propaganda, and a well-considered policy of encouragement of native industry on sound economic lines—again I emphasise co-operation—should be launched.

That policy is intimately bound up with self-government, the only part in doubt being a proper system of taxation for the rich. But revenue cannot be raised in any other way, and Indian financiers, wherever their interests lie, will be driven to it. For, though I have written of saving in certain directions, the unsatisfied needs of India—on education alone for instance—will prevent Budgets under self-government being less in amount than they are now.

The expenditure under military headings, amounting to about £21,000,000 in ordinary years of peace, with periodical fluctuations but with a steady average increase, is also an old subject of controversy. Undoubtedly, India has not been



dealt with fairly in this respect. It has had to bear the expense of operations that have been mainly Imperial. There are two Indias. There is the India which is a self-contained unit of government with both internal and external problems of law and order, and there is the India which has a relationship to the whole British Empire, and which has to face problems both of offence and defence which arise, or are presented on an extended scale, because it is part of this Empire. It is quite impossible to classify into well-defined compartments these two responsibilities, but certain rough lines can be drawn. A military force is necessary to secure India, not only in our possession, but as India—to protect it against invasion and internal disorder. That is very properly an Indian charge. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji once admitted that 40,000 soldiers might be required for this,<sup>1</sup> and if that was so twenty years ago, the military will not admit that fewer will be sufficient now. The strength of the army in India before the war was 77,500 of our regular army and 159,000 native troops. What is the proper charge for India to bear for this military occupation? A large part of the army in India—certainly one-half—is an Imperial army which we require for other than purely Indian purposes, and its cost, therefore, should be met from Imperial and not Indian funds. When we stationed troops in other parts of the Empire, we did not charge them upon the Colonies, but in India we have the influence of the dead hand. When the Company ruled, it hired troops from Great Britain, and not only maintained them when in India, but paid the cost of their transport. When the Company surrendered to the Crown, the habit of “lending” troops was kept up, as a fiction convenient to the Treasury of Great Britain. Owing to the report of the Financial Commission in 1900, the Home Government now pays £130,000 per annum, which is supposed to be about one-half of the cost of transport, and £100,000 is charged to the Home Treasury for half the military costs of Aden. That is all. India pays

<sup>1</sup> *Speeches and Writings*, Appendix A, p. 74.

the rest. Thus India is treated as an independent State, which, however, we rule and whose military policy we control, while it "borrows" from us a certain number of troops for which it pays. The arrangement is most unsatisfactory.

It may be said that if India were an independent State its military expenditure would be much higher. But then, India is not an independent State, and is entitled to claim some privileges of Empire; its weakness ought not to subject it to a more expensive military arrangement than Canada or Australia.

A self-governing India would no doubt insist upon bearing some definite share in defence, but like the Dominions it would settle how much it ought to bear: it would adjust the cost to its means, and it would decide in what form it was to make its contribution—perhaps an Indian-recruited army. In any event the present plan, by which India pays for the Imperial army stationed there, without in any way determining policy, is as bad as it can be. If the existing system of military defence is to last, the whole cost of the British army stationed in India should be borne by the Imperial Exchequer.

The Commission which reported in 1900 put an end, it is to be hoped, to a still greater grievance. Frontier wars and wars of annexation, like the Burmese Wars, as well as the Abyssinian Expedition, were all paid for by the Indian taxpayer. Only £5,000,000 of the £21,000,000 which the Afghan war cost was found by the Imperial Exchequer. These expeditions are in reality events in Imperial policy and should not be an Indian charge at all. Mr. Gokhale once described the position thus: "England has in the past borrowed troops from India for expeditions undertaken from considerations of Imperial policy, such as the expedition to China and Persia, the Abyssinian Expedition, and others, and on all these occasions all the ordinary expenses of these troops have been taken from India, England defraying their extraordinary expenses alone. On the other hand, when India had to borrow troops from England, as on the occasion of the Sind Campaign of

1846, the Punjab Campaign of 1849, and the Mutiny of 1857, every farthing of the expenses of these men, ordinary and extraordinary, including even the expenditure on their recruitment, was extorted from India." The Commission's Report met this particular grievance, but self-government would completely end unjust dealing and charge the Imperial Exchequer with expeditions that are Imperial.

On the civil side, there are several payments objectionable to a degree which cannot be measured merely by the amount of the charges. The cost of the Secretary of State's establishment in London is charged to Indian revenues. The Colonial Office is not so charged to the Colonies. Royal visits to India and visits of the Secretary of State<sup>1</sup> are also paid for by the Indian tax-payer. These items, which now amount to about four hundred thousand pounds, are steadily growing. They are all Imperial costs and, in the main, are fixed apart from the Indian Government. Their appearance in the Indian Budget is mean and is altogether unworthy of us.

One other item in Indian expenditure calls for notice on account of its unfairness to India. For a long time the value of the rupee was in relation to gold as one to ten, *e.g.* the rupee in Great Britain exchanged for 2s. In 1873-4 it began to fall and lost  $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ ; it went down slowly but steadily, every drop of a penny meaning the addition of a crore of rupees to Indian indebtedness, which had to be met on a gold basis. In 1895 it had fallen to 1s. 1d.; the mints were closed and the policy begun which created a token rupee, bearing the conventional value of 1s. 4d. Officers who had to send home money were badly hit; from 1893 additions were made to salaries of most Europeans, called "exchange compensations allowances," and in 1912, owing to the settlement of the value of the rupee, the Government issued a decision to add to European salaries

<sup>1</sup> "An expenditure of £8,800 arises in connection with the visit of the Secretary of State to India and the establishment of a Trade Commissioner's office in London" (*Financial Statement and Budget*, 1918-19, 61, p. 213).



amounts equal to these exchange allowances.<sup>1</sup> This again is unfair to the Indian tax-payer. Certainly the officer ought not to suffer, but the fact that exchange considerations affect his real salary is not an Indian affair at all, but an Imperial one, and these extra emoluments should be found by the British Treasury.

Indeed, the question is wider than this. When the Indian exchanges were being so grievously disturbed, the disturbance was common to all "silver" countries. But British policy in India was responsible for a good deal of the Indian unsettlement, and India's obligations to Great Britain seriously increased the difficulties. The controversy on the exchange is voluminous, complicated and obscure in some of its points, but since this country was responsible for the policy which brought the rupee problem to a critical head, it ought not to have left India to pay the whole expense of the depreciation, least of all that part involved in the payments made to the Government in London and its own servants in India.

The war has of course imposed upon India, as it has upon practically every nation in the world, new permanent burdens, and has laid them upon every kind of consumer as well as on the tax-payer. But it is important that I should emphasise that, until the war broke out, Indian Budgets, though increasing in amount, were not adding to the oppression of the people. They were not removing burdens, but the official mind was beginning to understand the meaning of Indian taxation and was adopting towards it a more sympathetic attitude. India's power to bear taxes was increasing, and that affords much consolation for responsible legislators in view of the increased expenditure which they will have to face. The extra war expenditure, however, whilst necessitating a better distribution of burdens, will prevent such a thorough revision as was possible before it was incurred.

<sup>1</sup> The operation of this was deferred because a Royal Commission had been appointed to inquire into the whole position of the Public Services of India.

In ten years up to 1913-14 the Land Revenue increased by £2,000,000, not owing to increased assessments, but to widened areas and irrigation; Salt decreased by £2,000,000 (it would be better if it disappeared), Stamps went up by £1,750,000 (a sign of prosperity), Excise went up by nearly £4,000,000 (an increase upon which the Government cannot congratulate itself), Customs by £3,500,000 (the result of a policy accepted by Nationalists, whatever it may mean in taxation to the poorer people), Assessed Taxes by only £700,000 (the weak spot in Indian taxation at the present moment and certainly no measure or indication of economic stagnation). The total increase of about £6,500,000 from revenue in these ten years is not the result of increased burdens. If the Empire would readjust the burdens which it imposes upon Indian finance, and if that were done and nothing more, the Indian Government could inaugurate great reforms which would increase Indian wealth, and could meanwhile wait, on pretty much the existing basis of taxation, for the augmented yield of revenue to the State which would result from that increase. Only by such an expedient can I see the Indian Government avoid the dilemma—India needs more State expenditure: India cannot stand an increase in the burden of taxation.

## CHAPTER XIII

### EDUCATION

I AM not to write in this chapter a history of education in India, I am only to discuss what problems our educational work there has raised. Nor am I to attempt to go into details of a reconstructed system ; I can only make some explanations of the existing chaos and give some general indications of how I think self-government will raise upon Indian culture an educational system which will enrich India from its own genius.

An education system in India is as old as Hindu ritual and was originally connected with it, and the life of the student was the first stage in the great pilgrimage to his being's accomplishment. The relation of teacher and pupil was as close and tender as that of father and son ; the young man who sought instruction was praised and he found schools and teachers available. In time, science, mathematics, logic, philosophy and the other ways to knowledge were differentiated and studied, colleges were opened, great names were made, and the busy and subtle brain of the Hindu thought, disputed, taught from generation to generation. But with the break up of Indian government after Aurungzeb, misery and anarchy submerged education, and it sank to such a low level that it ceased to have any influence on the country. Still, the tradition survived, and if it cannot be said that education flourished, schools existed in very large numbers.

In the Madras Presidency between 1822 and 1826 it was officially estimated that just under one-sixth of the boys



of school age were at school of some kind (there is now just twice that proportion). In Bombay the numbers were one in eight, whilst in Bengal one-fifth of the whole population could read. The teaching was very deficient, but the demand for it was there to attest to a widely spread desire on the part of Indian parents to give their children something that might be called education.<sup>1</sup>

When the British came the care of schools did not at first concern them ; but by and by they began to feel responsibility for the general condition of the people. They accepted their call to govern and they began to enquire into the condition of the nation.

The need for education was borne in upon the Company first of all because it required native clerks and subordinate officers. Warren Hastings opened a school at his own expense at Calcutta in 1782, to meet a complaint made by Moham-medans that the literary Hindu was monopolising appointments under the Company. In 1791 the Company opened a Sanskrit College at Benares to supply itself with Hindus for judicial appointments and to encourage Sanskrit scholarship. The College was grossly mismanaged, the first Rector having been declared by the Chairman of the College Committee to be " the greatest villain he ever saw."

Conspicuous amongst the pioneers of general education was Sir Charles Grant, who ultimately became a director of the Company, Member of Parliament for Inverness-shire, and one of the Clapham sect. From an intimate personal acquaintance with the people he began, in 1792, to write his *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain*, which five years later he dispatched to London.<sup>2</sup> Of the condition of Bengal he wrote that, though the Bengali did not engage in open combat, " robberies, thefts, burglaries,

<sup>1</sup> For an interesting account of *Ancient Indian Education*, see a book with that title by the Rev. F. E. Keay.

<sup>2</sup> This was not published until it appeared as an appendix to a Blue book in 1832.

river piracies, and all sorts of depredations when darkness, secrecy, or surprise can give advantage, are exceedingly common." Thieving was a caste profession. Zemindars harboured bands of these scoundrels and shared their booty with them. This was common in town and village. Venal justice had done much to encourage such a state of things, but the roots of disorder went deeper down. They were nurtured in the disordered life of the people, while a religious fatalism prevented the benign operation of the fear of punishment—even of death. Education was the only way of reform, and the education must consist first of all in teaching English. "The first communication, and the instrument of introducing the rest, must be the English language." Much would follow from this, but "the most important . . . would be the knowledge of our religion. . . . Thence they would be instructed in the nature and perfection of the One True God, and in the real history of man: his creation, his lapsed state and the means of his recovery"; "the most awful sanctions" and "the most interesting motives" would be given to moral conduct. He discussed the possibility of political complications arising in consequence, and mentioned such demands as that for self-government, independence, the admission of natives to commissioned rank in the army, and so on. But that risk was, he thought, no justification for keeping India ignorant. He also foresaw that the spread of English education might necessitate the control of the press by the Government, "which would not be very favourable to our character for consistency." Other servants of the Company referred to the same matter in frequent minutes and dispatches. One thing was clear. Education was required for India's regeneration, and India wished to be educated. Children were going to school, but the education was bad. The problem was first of all how to improve it and then how to extend it.

In 1813 Parliament agreed to a grant of one lakh of rupees per annum for the "revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of learned natives of India," and for

the spreading of a "knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories of India." Lord Moira's historical minute, discussing the condition of the village vernacular schools and proposing improvements, appeared in 1815. But other agencies of regeneration, inspired by the same spirit as Grant's, were at work. Schools were opened by missionaries<sup>1</sup> for propaganda purposes, and private philanthropy moved David Hare to begin, in 1817, his work in Calcutta for the improvement of vernacular schools. In the same year the Calcutta School Book Society was formed to provide books, and the next year came the Calcutta School Society to provide encouragement for promising youths to pursue their studies with a view to becoming teachers. This latter Society also opened model schools, employed inspectors, and undertook the supervision of schools. The activities of the former Society put an end to manuscript books and introduced printed ones.

Then a new difficulty arose. Through what medium was the education to be given? The controversy between Orientalists and Anglicists flamed for some years with extraordinary fury, divided educationalists into two enraged camps, and postponed work. The money voted in 1813 was not appropriated until 1823, when a General Committee of Public Instruction was appointed from the Civil Service to supervise its expenditure. Upon this Committee was a majority of Orientalists, but the Court of Directors—influenced, it is said, by James Mill, who presumably wrote the dispatch of 1824, which anticipated the minute of Macaulay of eleven years later—leaned to Anglicism. This delayed progress, but practice was settling theory and the demand for English instruction grew. Both in Bombay and Madras schools giving an English education were opening. It was the time when awakened India was casting off all its old garments, and when British

<sup>1</sup> The two great modern bodies for missionary propaganda by education, the London Missionary Society and the Christian Knowledge Society, opened their first schools in 1819 and 1822 respectively.



reformers were seeking to re-create the world, independently of historical and traditional inheritances.

Macaulay had declined to take his place as Chairman of the Committee of Public Instruction whilst it was doubtful as to its policy. In order to settle the matter he drafted his famous minute as member of the Viceroy's Council, and for the guidance of the Viceroy.

The minute is dated February 2nd, 1835, and ran full tilt against the practices and assumptions which, in his language of picturesque exaggeration, withheld the title of "a learned native" from a Hindu familiar with "the poetry of Milton, the metaphysics of Locke, and the physics of Newton," but awarded it to those who had "studied in the sacred books of the Hindus all the uses of cusa-grass, and all the metaphysics of absorption into the Deity." With this smack of satisfaction, Macaulay bared his sword. In substance his literary flourish was cheap and absurd, but it was an opening which gave confidence to the assault. The expression of ideas and facts through the vernacular, he went on, was so limited that intellectual improvement "can only at present be effected by means of some language not vernacular." Though, he continued, "I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic," he had read translations and had conversed with men proficient in Eastern tongues. "I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." He took it as an axiom that it was in poetry that Eastern writers stood highest; in the recording of facts and observations they were nowhere.<sup>1</sup> In his

<sup>1</sup> It is very interesting to compare this fiery memorandum with the paragraphs in the fifty-second chapter of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, in which Arab learning and culture are discussed. The different spirit and the superior scientific caution of the older writer are well displayed in the sentences of which this is the first: "Our education in the Greek and Latin schools may have fixed in our minds a standard of exclusive taste; and I am not forward to condemn the literature and judgment of nations of whose language I am ignorant."

eleventh paragraph he burst out like a psalmist into praise of English. The extract is long, but it is delicious, and I give it. "The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to capitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us—with models of every species of eloquence,—with historical compositions which, considered merely as narratives, have seldom been surpassed, and which, considered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction, have never been equalled,—with just and lively representations of human life and human nature,—with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, trade,—with full and correct information respecting every experimental science which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations." The full orchestration of words sinks after this. English was also the official language. If we did not teach its science we should "countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines that would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy that would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas of treacle and seas of butter." Let us bless India with a revival of learning similar to that of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe. English to India was what Latin and Greek were then to us. Moreover, "the languages of Western Europe civilised Russia. I cannot doubt that they will do for the Hindu what they have done for the Tartar."

At this point, however, his foot touches more solid ground. There was a demand amongst students for English. They paid for that; they had to be paid for attending classes in Sanskrit and Arabic. "The state of the market is the decisive

test." Books in Sanskrit and Arabic were printed at the Government's expense and were not sold ; the School Book Society was making a profit of 20 per cent. on its sales of English books. Then he turns back upon a false conclusion. Because the students of the latter learning had petitioned Government for places, their learning was useless. These poor scholars actually asked the patronage of Government to make smooth their path through life. Therefore, "bounties and premiums, such as ought not to be given even for the propagation of Truth, we lavish on false taste and false philosophy." Even in law, the work of the Law Commission ought to put Hindu and Mohammedan rules and customs on the scrap heap ; and as regards religion, could we decently bribe young men from State revenues by teaching them how "to purify themselves after touching an ass or what texts of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat ?" (*sic*). Finally, to teach in English was practicable, in spite of what had been urged to the contrary. "Less than half the time which enables an English youth to read Herodotus and Sophocles ought to enable a Hindu to read Hume and Milton." If his views were not to be accepted, he would retire from the chairmanship of the Education Committee.

To read Lord Macaulay's confused thinking in virile and dashing English is enlivening, to study it is melancholy. It mixed up subjects to be taught with the language in which they ought to be taught, and it displayed no appreciation of the fact that the Indian mind was a product of history and not a blank sheet of paper upon which anything could be written by any teacher. The minute stands a curious monument to the total lack of the historical mind in one who was to be labelled "historian" in the pigeon holes of future generations. It ended indecision, however. Henceforth, Indian education was to be on English lines, and under English direction, with the English language as the medium for instruction and Western civilisation as the nourishment for its roots.

An interesting revival of the discussion took place in con-



nection with the project to found a University for the Punjab. In 1865 an education society had been formed in the Province for the purpose of diffusing knowledge through the vernacular. Its promoters were of opinion that the State education as hitherto given had neglected the "historical, traditional, and religious" roots of all real culture, and was far too uniform in its methods. Sir Donal McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor, supported the movement, and from it the demand for an Oriental University arose. "The classical languages of India were the sources not only of the languages spoken at the present day, but also of the traditions, religion, and ancient history of the Indian nation. No system which ignored Arabic or Sanskrit could hope to meet with respect, popularity, or support from the people of India, while any errors in scientific teaching which the ancient literature might contain could easily be eliminated or corrected by the light of modern European knowledge."<sup>1</sup> Proposals on these lines were laid before the Lieutenant-Governor in 1865, and received his support. But the execution hung fire. Indians were themselves divided, and, in the end, an institution lower in status than a University was recognised by Government, where the instruction had to be given in English as a rule and the examinations conducted in English.

The time when Macaulay wrote his minute was one of great revolutions and liberal faith. The West glowed like a land of promise. The flame of reason was to purify the world. "Enlightened" Indians took that view. As I have said, some of them had gone to Western extremes and saw nothing in their own past but ignorance and superstition; the missionaries, bold men of single-minded purpose and faith unclouded by doubt, held that nothing in life mattered but Christian conversion, and were firm in the conviction that native ignorance alone stood in their way. To them English education was the open door to belief, so they set up their printing presses, turned out their books, and started their

<sup>1</sup> Syed Mahmood, *A History of English Education in India*, p. 91.

schools. The demand was for English, and none would do reverence to Indian culture. The views of Mill and Macaulay therefore won an easy victory in the end. The Governor-General in Council decided that in future Government funds should be spent in teaching Indians "a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language," and the Committee set about its new task.

What that task was it saw quite clearly. It was to be "a system of really national education which shall in time embrace every village in the country." Qualified schoolmasters were to be provided and an adequate series of textbooks in the vernacular was to be produced. But it was a revolutionary rather than a reforming spirit that was abroad, and revolutions generally destroy too much. The self-same spirit which applauded Macaulay killed the indigenous schools of Bengal, scrapped the whole system of Bengal elementary education, and began a new system, the purpose of which was to educate the middle and literary classes on English models, in the expectation that "through the agency of these scholars the reformed education would descend to the rural vernacular schools."

This, in my view, was the fatal departure. The difficulty was real. On the one hand was the desire for mass education, on the other the zeal for spreading Western culture amongst those who could come into touch with it. At first the authorities meant to build upon the village schools. Inquiries were ordered upon them, but delay took place. There were wars to fight and settlements to effect, and meantime the primary school was left to decay, except by missionaries who used it for propaganda purposes, and whose views of a universal religion unconsciously aided the politics of a universal culture. The humble vernacular village schools with their poorly paid and imperfectly equipped teachers were neglected. To develop and transform them was to be a slow process, and everybody was in a great hurry. The college policy was begun with the intention of leavening the lump from above with a totally

new leaven. It has failed to reach its higher purposes, as it was bound to fail. It has not got down to the elementary school. It has produced men, it has created a class, it has destroyed certain evils, but it has not raised and enlightened India. The Indians in haste to be "educated" thought only of colleges. It was the college they wanted. They saw a Paradise whose gates were shut against them, they knew of the keys that were used by the Western races for opening the gates; they demanded the keys. And behold, strait has been the gate and narrow has been the way; many have missed both, and few there have been who have entered in thereat. And all the while the education system of India has failed to make a foundation for itself, and to co-ordinate and proportion its grades.

The enthusiasm and devotion which British educators in India showed were undoubted, and the influence which the teachers who laboured in the early days exerted upon young Indians, keen to acquire knowledge, was great and good. But one must doubt if they pursued ways which really led to the goals intended. The Christian teachers assumed that Christian faith and Western education were bound up together. The obstacles in the way of their main propaganda were ignorance and superstition, and when these were removed, they argued, the way to the enlightenment of the soul would also be opened up. India could be saved only by the destruction of Indian tradition and culture. What I have written on the Macaulay minute shows the secular view of the same subject.

The fault of the educationalists was not that they had ungenerous intentions regarding India—the very opposite is true—but that they mistook the nature of education; and the blame, if blame there was, lay with the thought of their times, not with their intentions. The reforming radicalism of that generation wrote history like a contemporary political pamphlet and devised its schemes on *a priori* principles, overlooking historical differences and the organic continuity



and unity of national life and thought. Education to them was a teaching, whereas it is a culture : it was like filling a bag with treasures, whereas it is like producing a harvest from long-prepared soil. Its methods, its subjects, its implements, are made for it by the past of the people for whose benefit it is being devised. Men's minds and habits are not blank sheets of paper upon which any legend or faith can be written, or any rule of conduct engraved. The methods and subjects taught in one civilisation have not the same value and result when taught in another civilisation. For instance, our school system rests upon our family life, but the Indian family is poles asunder from the English one. Nothing is truer, or is being proved with more conclusiveness in our own experience during the past two generations than this : education cannot come from above and without ; it must come from below and within. Even as regards weeds in the mind, the problem is not really how to uproot them, but how to transform them. The errors we have committed in our own schools, because we have never fully recognised that the whole conception of education had to be transformed and not merely refitted with a new apparatus of thought and conduct, we have multiplied a thousand-fold in India. We have been seeking to transfer Western civilisation into the Indian mind gutted of its Indian traditions. We have tried to transplant Oxford and Eton into India. We have imposed a school discipline and a school psychology which are English, and then have wondered at our failure. The French, German, and American systems are not English because France, Germany, and America are not England, but we have assumed that India is England. The task we set before us was an impossible one. We aimed at destroying Indian culture. We put impediments in the way of Indian thought by compelling the Indian student to express himself in English, and, what added to our failure, for generations we took no pains to see that the English was properly taught. Some of the men who used it in examinations never could speak it really or think in it. The language

weapon was never comfortably grasped by the mental personality of those who used it.

This, as I say, is partly owing to bad teaching, but the error lies deeper than that. Most of those who acquired a colloquial knowledge of the tongue, or an easy and natural use of it, did so only comparatively late in life when the spontaneity of youth was going. Their speech, like all tongues acquired through classics, retains a stilted and grandiloquent form. The Eastern lingual habit does not go ; it remains to exaggerate the flowers and flourishes of Burke and Macaulay. A florid expression means a florid thought, and those who are responsible for having created this, object to it when they meet with it in the Indian in real life.

Language enshrines thought. It is an instrument evolved, moulded, and fashioned by the mind that uses it. How, for instance, can we separate the German mind from the German tongue ? When used by a culture other than that which fashioned it, it makes thought superficial and artificial. It twists it and cramps it. Because this is true, Indian college education has become largely a matter of memory, a veneer upon a different substance. From this have come nine-tenths of the just complaints that can be made against this education. Not touching the life of the people, it becomes a mechanical affair.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The weakness of our educational methods may be illustrated in a concrete form. In 1916, out of 4,732 candidates who sat for the Madras University Intermediate Examination, 65·8 per cent. failed in English. On the one hand, it was complained that the English examination was too stiff ; on the other, that colleges were putting up students whose education did not reach the requisite standards. Six out of 34 from Hyderabad, 37 out of 237 from Trichinopoly passed. At a meeting of the Senate it was urged that this meant ruin to parents (!), and it was moved, though not carried, that the adjudication of the examiners be set aside and that candidates be passed who obtained 30 per cent. in English and 35 per cent. of the total possible for the whole examination. An influential Indian paper, commenting on the result, demanded that examinations should be conducted by those "who can correctly appreciate local conditions and approximate their actions with practical ideals"! The reports must have been saddening reading to many Indian educationalists.

But the organic damage has been greater than that. In one's wanderings in India one too frequently comes across a regal palace glowing in white marble, beautiful in all the traceries and designs of Moghul architecture, whose great halls, however, are furnished with cracked furniture from Tottenham Court Road, and whose vast walls are hung with dirty pictures from the Salon. That is what we have done to the Indian mind. We have not only made it despise its own culture and throw it out ; we have asked it to fill up the vacant places with furniture which will not stand the climate. The mental Eurasianism that is in India is appalling. Such minds are nomad. They belong to no civilisation, no country, and no history. They create a craving that cannot be satisfied, and ideals that are unreal. They falsify life. They deprive men of the nourishment of their cultural past, and the substitutes they supply are unsubstantial.

In the larger centres of population like Calcutta and Bombay, Indians thus educated, successful in business or the professions, and surrounded by a Western society and being part of it, conquer all the impediments which they have to meet and can vindicate in every way their claim to equality with the best. They have assimilated Western culture, they have adapted themselves to Western business methods. They could not do England more credit if they were Englishmen—in fact they are more akin to us than are the Englishmen deteriorated by a long residence in the East. But their success is not the solution of the problem of Indian education. The Oriental Club in Calcutta is not India—God forbid that it should become India. The Indians who have been at Oxford and Cambridge, London or Edinburgh, and who spend the rest of their lives on special plots of Indian soil amidst special products of British education, are too often a community by themselves, in India but not of it. Living in India, not the geographical expression but the Motherland of a people and the atmosphere of a race, they are not at home there. Not able to join in the organic life



of their community, they tend to become parasitical and to live on it. They have to create new ways of living, from multiplying legal cases to quack doctoring ; and, when this is observed by critics, the Indian is condemned, whereas the blame lies very largely with those who have placed false ideals before him, and have led him in mistaken ways. We sought to give the Eastern mind a Western content and environment ; we have succeeded too well in establishing intellectual and moral anarchy in both.

This is sometimes justified on the assumption that Indian tradition had to be reduced to chaos before liberty came to dwell in the Indian mind. The argument and expectation are the same as those of the political anarchists. If they are wrong as regards the more superficial affairs of State, how much more wrong are they as regards the much more deep-seated affairs of the mind ?

Moreover, the first enthusiasm of the educators has gone. Disillusionment treads on the heels of error, and weariness on those of disillusionment. The Duffs and the Grants belong to a past generation. They could pursue a bad system because their personality, and not their teaching, was what educated their pupils. Now with the crowds of students, the numbers of colleges, the formalising of the institutions by the Government, men of first-rate ability as educationalists do not go to India. Colleges attached to missions like St. Stephen's, Delhi, still get them because they listen to the call of religion, but the Government colleges do not get them. Discipline has deteriorated because respect has been undermined.<sup>1</sup> An opposition between students and professors has grown up and has led to frequent outbursts of riotous behaviour

<sup>1</sup> The colossal blunder which has put and kept Indian teachers of undisputed attainments, and of whom students are proud, in a class inferior to Englishmen of less experience and lower attainments has tended to destroy the *esprit de corps* of colleges, and to make students recalcitrant. This is caused by the grading of the Education Service by which newly imported professors from Great Britain are given a higher status than distinguished Indian scholars and teachers.

such as disgraced the Presidency College, Calcutta, in 1916, and led to the resignation of the Principal. It is also a cause of the political sedition which has spread in colleges during recent years. A moan which wanders through all the surveys of Indian education and all treatises on the habits of Indian youth has swelled into greater amplitude since the youthful college students have run after anarchy and political crime, and have shown restiveness under discipline. What, it is asked, is the moral significance of this education? Is it only freeing the youth from the control of the old beliefs without putting them under the yoke of any other system of moral order? Whatever may be said against our system of education in India, the blame for the lack of discipline in the youth does not lie at its door. What does lie at its door is a charge that those responsible so misunderstood this Indian malady that their treatment of it tended to aggravate it rather than cure it, and that their latest prescriptions are as mistaken as their earlier ones.

One finds only too commonly in India the opinion that "little manuals of religious sentiment and ethical maxims,"<sup>1</sup> or religious education imparted in a dogmatic and class-book style, is the proper antidote for this poison. It is urged that Indian education should be held together by a religious (that is, a Christian) framework, and the Government is blamed for an educational policy which, respecting Hindu susceptibilities, concerned itself exclusively with secular subjects and was absolutely independent of faith and creed.

This is a mistaken view. It is perfectly true that the social system of law and order to which any community spontaneously responds is based either upon tradition of a political kind, like that expressed in the English rhyme :

God bless the squire and his relations  
And keep us in our proper stations,

or upon a religious sentiment, or, and this is most common,

<sup>1</sup> Lord Moira's Minute (1815).

upon both. British education and the general British political tradition are inimical both to the political and social and the religious traditions of India and are bound to weaken them. But it is not really there that the evil lies. That is an inevitability which it would be waste of time either to deplore or argue about. India could not be guarded from the disturbing influences of the West by any efforts of any Government or other authority.

As a matter of fact, however, this loss of moral restraint was deplored before an English school was opened. We find that simultaneously with the first movements for a better education in India, sad reports were made of the deterioration of Indian social morals and manners—indeed in these days that very deterioration was used as an argument why English education should be given. Sir C. Grant's memorandum shows that, and Lord Moira wrote, in the minute to which I have referred: "The unceasing wars which had harassed all parts of India left everywhere their invariable effects—a disorganisation of that framework of habit and opinion which enforces moral conduct and an emancipation of all those irregular impulses which revolt at its restraint. The village schoolmasters could not teach that in which they themselves had never been instructed; and universal debasement of mind, the constant concomitant of subjugation to despotic rule, left no chance that an innate sense of equity should in those confined circles suggest the recommendation of the principles not thought worthy of cultivation by the Government." Lord Moira put his finger upon the spot. The social and moral unsettlement of India belongs to the historical unsettlement of India. The one is the result of the other. The military conquest of an enormous area of territory and a huge mass of people; the government of the tax-collector rather than of the law-giver and the judge; the social disruption which comes from political disruption,—these would have put obstacles in the way of the very best system of education, and any curriculum of instruction designed



to keep the young docile, reverent, and subordinate. The administrators in India and the students of Indian problems must not mistake the nature of the difficulty. It is to be solved by the establishment of an Indian order, and will hardly be touched by the inclusion of religion, either Hindu or Christian, in Indian education. It is to be the final proof of the settlement of India, not the result of the work of the schoolmaster or the professor.

But even though it be true that moral restraint is primarily a product of social order, an educational system has great influence upon it. A system which breaks with a historical past disturbs without pacifying ; it pulls up anchors without providing rudders and compasses which are of use, and so it leaves the vessels to drift and bump together and become stranded. Moral restraint must be a habit, not a precept, and habits come from traditions. It belongs to the axioms upon which men act without thinking, not to the conclusions and conduct of an active reason. At that point, and at that point alone, is education vulnerable to the charge that it has aided moral unsettlement. We have deliberately severed the ties which bound Indian society together rather than strengthened them, by picking out the strands weakened by superstition and ignorance and putting in their places new ones spun on Eastern minds from Western enlightenment.<sup>1</sup>

I admit that the religious faiths of India are woven into the social fabric far more intimately than they are here, that they pervade the whole life of India, and that, in consequence, the case for the recognition of religious instruction there is

<sup>1</sup> One has to note that the Government is beginning to be aware of the truth embodied in this criticism. In an address to the Calcutta University sent by the Viceroy in the name of the King in 1912, the following passages occur : " It is to the Universities of India that I look to assist in that gradual union and fusion of the culture and aspirations of Europeans and Indians on which the future well-being of India so greatly depends " ; and, " you have to conserve the ancient learning and simultaneously push forward Western science." But we still wait for the changes which are to give effect to these wise words.

much stronger than it is here. With that I shall deal in the chapter on religion, but I note here that one must watch with interest the experiment of the Hindu university just begun at Benares. It will succeed only as it acquires a place and spirit for itself. Its education in the sacred books will be of spiritual value only in so far as its atmosphere is truly Indian and it gathers up into itself the mind of India. Alighur, the Mohammedan college, is a place where Mohammedans are educated, not where Mohammedanism is breathed. I fear these attempts to recreate the past will fail, but if they could only catch up the past as a broken thread and weave it into the future, they would be doing the best work possible for India. "I hope," said Dr. P. C. Ray, in an address at the laying of the foundation stone of the Hindu university, "the starting of this university will inaugurate a new era, and I trust it will be a sacred confluence of ideals of the East and the West." That is what will give India that social and spiritual harmony from which the social and spiritual conduct of the individual springs. But, I repeat, to political order we must trust more in these days for moral restraints than to ethical doctrines taught in schools. We have to establish a national harmony of which education is of course an essential part, but only a part.

Now I proceed to expose another fault which ought to be removed from Indian education. The danger of utilitarianism has for generations beset Indian education and the policy of the Government has increased it. There is something like an Indian tradition that the ruler provides for the scholar, and when the Company first and the Crown afterwards educated men for public service in one or other of the many departments of Indian government, they encouraged the college youth to look to Government service as his future career. This, as well as the rushing tide of revolt from Indian tradition, determined the issues of the contest between Orientalists and Anglicists in Macaulay's day. Obviously this expecta-

tion could be fulfilled only whilst the colleges turned out year by year a comparatively small number of men. When the number exceeded the Government's power of absorption, men with academic degrees and training were like the landless man after the Black Death in England. The Bar provided counter-attractions, but the number of lawyers became excessive too, and the lower types began to manufacture cases for a living. The other learned professions either gave no field for ambitious men, or had to be pursued under conditions for which the students had been unfitted. Here, again, Indian education, even from a utilitarian point of view, had been pursued without reference to the life of the country. The road through the college led too often into the wilderness.

All the while, education was pursued by the Indian in a blind sort of way. He treated it as practically an end in itself. He pursued its badges and its degrees. When the lists of examination results were published, fathers with unmarried daughters hovered around to pick up the boys who had done best. To pass an examination was held to be the tangible proof of success, the open sesame to life. To sit but fail became in time a distinction of itself. Examinations were multiplied. They were the events which won the chaplets. Subjects were taken up not because they interested the student, but because they were necessary for marks (not by any means an exclusively Indian fault), and when the examination was over, memory threw off its impressions or they were covered up. That is true in all countries, but it is tragically true in India.<sup>1</sup> In this terrible problem of the deteriora-

<sup>1</sup> Speaking in the Calcutta University Senate, Dr. Fermor, of the Geological Survey, gave his experience as a member of a certain committee to examine candidates for an appointment as to their educational fitness. Most of these were Calcutta B.A.s or B.Sc.s. "All those who sat failed to satisfy a single test in their own subject, although they had obtained degrees but a year before. The physicists had forgotten their physics, the geometers their geometry, the mathematicians their mathematics and failed in simple addition, and ultimately the candidate selected was one who had not gone through a course of University education" (*Indian Review*, January 1916, p. 10).



tion of the spirit of education and of the prospects of the college youth, India was receiving but little guidance. She was being allowed to drift. Something would turn up. There would come a bend in the road with a new prospect ahead. If you asked when and why, you were told that it would be sure to come. The unhappy people went on with their work, Indian education became perverted by examinations, and Indian intelligence sharpened to secure marks for answering questions. We set out to educate, but we missed our way and found ourselves in the realms of utilitarianism and not of culture.

Now we are on the verge of self-government and it behoves us to resurvey the way we have come to see where we have gone wrong, to make good our errors if happily it be not too late, to reorientate our policy. Obviously what we should aim for is the creation of India, the historical Motherland, holding a place of honour in the modern world, surrounded by her children bound to her in a spiritual and political allegiance.

Therefore let us begin by restating the century-old problem which the early educationalists had to face. Lord Macaulay and his friends discussed whether India should continue to receive an education in "what was known 2,000 years ago," or be taught Western up-to-date knowledge; but in reality that was not the problem at issue. To abandon India to a literary Oriental education and a scientific one, the textbooks of which were centuries old, was impossible. She had to go to the West to bring her up to date. She was like a person who had been wandering in a far land and who on returning home had to be told what had happened in the meanwhile. The fabric of her education had crumbled and it had to be rebuilt. During the rebuilding she had to be helped. Practically no one sought to wrap up India in the mummy cloths of dead science. Sir Charles Wood's Dispatch of 1854, far more accurately than Macaulay's minute, states the problem. It lay in this: How could Western knowledge best be used to enrich the mind of India? Ought it to be

engrafted on Indian roots, or ought it to be transplanted from England as a full-grown tree ?

The depreciation of Indian achievements and culture, after the manner of James Mill and Macaulay, was true neither psychologically nor historically. India has at its command a literature, a philosophy, and a religion in its undebased form, which touch the most inspiring chords of human nature. It has a past of trade, enterprise and prosperity, and of technical skill which can convince every intelligent Indian that the Creator did not confine economic and industrial power to nations of the West ; and though the history of India, as taught to us, deals only with India's decline and anarchy—and that not very accurately told—India had its Golden Ages when it was quite as well governed as we were ourselves, and was certainly as prosperous. No one who knows anything of India's past and who has read its sacred books, or has come into contact with their wisdom, no one who has done more than spend a day in the art and industries section of the Indian Museum in Calcutta, no one who knows anything of the architecture of India, can doubt but that in its life lies a great reservoir of culture and skill, inspiration and pride. It is a circumstance upon which British and Indians alike may look back upon with bitter regret that, whilst these riches were lying neglected and the people's eyes turned deliberately from them, we were putting nothing but dead school books in their place.

In spite of all the talk about it, the material for Western culture in India is really so meagre as hardly to exist. There is not a decent university library in India, and such as there is gives no opportunity for original work. Where is there an inspiring example of Western art ? I have searched India and still put the question to my friends : What does stand for Western culture in India ? On the other hand, such Oriental libraries as that at Bankipur, such museums as those of Calcutta and Madras, provide ample beginnings for the higher studies of Indian literature, art, and

history. Fortunately the growth of Indian nationalism has created a reaction towards Indian culture. Magazines like *The Modern Review* give the artistic, the historical, and the literary, as well as the political, activities of the new Indian school a platform and an expression. Such works as that on Indian shipping by Radhakumud Mukerji show the directions in which the historical school is to move ; in science, the Chemical Department of the Presidency College need bow its head before few such departments in the world : the work of its head and his students is universally known, and at the same College, the Professor of Physics, Dr. Bose, has gathered round him a band of assistants and pupils equal to any working elsewhere with a great student and investigator. The Tagores, in art and poetry, are vitalising other parts of Indian life ; the Hindu university, if properly managed and kept sufficiently free from the numbing grip of the Government, should result in a quickening all round ; schools like those near Hardwar and Bohlpur should give a new impetus to proper Indian teaching. Generally, there is evidence everywhere that Indian educationalists are applying to Indian needs the more modern conceptions of organic sociology and psychology, and are beginning to undo the mistakes of the preceding generation guided by the individualist psychology of the Radical reformers. This point has been well brought out by an Indian writer : "It does not seem even now recognised by many that the educational methods adopted by the Indian universities have been only one-sided in their character, in that they have not hitherto sufficiently taken note of indigenous traditions as contributing to the forces of social order and stability, but on the other hand, have, either consciously or unwittingly, but always in the name of progress and enlightenment, set themselves to the task of undermining the very fabric of Indian society, by weakening its traditions without being able in the meantime to foster and promote and create other traditions which would serve as a social cement."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Dawn Magazine*, July–August 1913.



The return of young and nationalist India to Hinduism is seen in nothing better than in the project for a Hindu university, to which reference has been made already. This was a desire akin to that of Catholic Ireland to have a university of its own. "True Hindus, true Mussalmans, and true Christians are wanted," wrote an advocate of this university, "and they cannot, we have sufficient ground to believe, come out from any College or other educational institution unless it is strictly directed according to their respective faiths, traditions, and religions." I doubt if the substantives which end this sentence are well chosen. I should substitute one which is more comprehensive than they, one freer from error, one that indicates better the changing content of Truth—the word "culture." The Government may grant a charter, the university may be residential, it may have plenty of money—that is nothing. It will not produce men, Hindus. "Paul may preach and Apollos may water, but it is God who giveth the increase." The West has done all it can for India. The Indian must turn back upon his own culture and must enrich it by fertilisation with other cultures. "Revive the Hindu spirit, endeavouring your very best to keep it in order. This should be the aim of the Hindu university, there being nothing nobler than that. And if efforts are not made in this direction, better have no university at all." Here we have the feeling that education must be organic to a people. It must be Indian. That is unassailable truth.

If in this critical survey I have been lamenting that Western education in India has missed its mark, it must not be supposed that I mean that education in India has been a complete failure. It has not. Whatever its faults may have been, it has kept a light shining upon the Indian mind. It has built and endowed schools, colleges, and universities, and that alone is something. It has brought to India a few men of wonderful influence who have taught the youth of India ideals of usefulness, of rectitude, of discipline, and given them an interest

in their country and their race which otherwise they would not have known or felt. A Ranade, a Telang, a Ghokale—each is a product of Western influence upon an Indian mind. It has also unified India. A college system stretching from Madras to Lahore, and from Calcutta to Bombay, has a greater influence in one generation in making India a community, in giving it a political nationalism, than a century of government centring in a capital city. It moreover breaks down those artificial barriers which an old-time necessity raised between class and class, and which religious custom riveted upon India. Even the use of English has its advantages, however heavy is the price that has to be paid for it. In the future, India may look back upon these years and grieve over some of the havoc they have wrought, but at the same time it will be able to console itself with the good they have done. The Hares, the Duffs, the Grants will retain an honoured place amongst the great benefactors of India.

Further, if Indian education is willing to be judged by the success which it has attained as regards a purpose which was candidly avowed by some of its founders, it has provided the Government with a great mass of officials ranging from village clerks to District Magistrates, from Forestry officers to assistant surgeons, and that is an achievement of considerable political value.

It remains to outline what reforms are now necessary to put the education of India on a more scientific footing.

But before doing this, let there be no doubt about one thing. We cannot draw the pen through the Macaulay Minute and begin afresh. We must take what has been done and improve upon it, modify it, make it our point of departure. It has been embedded in Indian life. A large part of our reforming work will consist therefore not in making new departures, but in filling up and amplifying what has been done, and in putting into operation recommendations made long since, and intentions declared three-quarters of a century ago—as for instance in Sir Charles Wood's Dispatch of 1854. That being clearly understood I may proceed to proposals.

We must abandon completely the idea that Indian education has to be controlled by Englishmen. They are necessary for teaching some subjects like English literature and may be employed as special lecturers, but they are not necessary in order to impart characteristics to the system itself. Only so long as the system is alien will aliens be required to run it; an educational system is essentially part of national life. Sir Sankaran Nair, as Education Minister, Principal Rudra, as head of St. Stephen's College, can do more for Indian education than Englishmen who may be their superiors as educationalists at home; Bohlpur and Hardware have more influence on India than the nearest approach to Eton that can ever be founded there. Of course a great educationalist is a blessing to a country irrespective of whether it is the country of his own origin or not. A Chinaman could do well in England, but, speaking of teaching generally, a good teacher must know his country and be one in mental make-up with his pupils, and so Indians will educate India better than Britons can. Therefore, the policy of supplying professors from Great Britain must be changed. We are at the end of the period when Indian professors—for no other reason except that they are Indian—were ranked in a lower grade of the Service than Englishmen. That system has played havoc in the minds of the students and is deeply resented by them. Nor has the English professor in later years been successful. His qualifications as a teacher have not been good, even when his place in his university examination has been satisfactory. He has not known how to handle his pupils. He has not been their *guru* and he has not taken the trouble to understand them. In class he has too frequently made rude remarks to them, and nearly all the college strikes and riots have arisen from this.<sup>1</sup> We have certainly not succeeded in finding the right men to go to Government colleges. India must produce

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the report of the Committee appointed by the Government of Bengal to inquire into the assault committed upon Professor Oaten by students of the Presidency College, Calcutta, May 1916.



its own professors, and if they are not ready prepared all at once we must begin to look for them and see that the education system is not a barrier against them.

The Government must allow more freedom to Universities. To-day it regards them as a Department of State and interferes with them too much. In Madras, contrary to good tradition, the member of the Executive Council responsible for education has been made Vice-Chancellor of the University. The Government has irritated Senates by repeatedly trying to influence examinations. For instance, the Bombay University has been for thirty years at loggerheads with it about the Matriculation Examination, and even if we were to grant that the Government view in this respect is right, the long duration of the controversy only shows how fundamentally wrong government educational methods are. Its present policy of checking and controlling only encourages University Boards to kick over the traces. They tend to become a sort of "opposition to the Government," whereas if they were made responsible they would be influenced far more by purely educational considerations, and would themselves check the evil tendencies of examinations, and end the other causes which lower the value of Indian instruction and prevent it in so many cases from becoming education at all. The freeing of education from Government management has been in some way or other recommended by every commission<sup>1</sup> that has inquired into Indian education.

The two great educational needs of India are elementary schools and teachers. The idea that India can be educated from above, from colleges, must be abandoned. It not only means that students find themselves "above" when they are not educated sufficiently to be there, but that the lower schools and colleges and their pupils concentrate their attention upon getting "above." A system of elementary education covering the villages, based upon Mr. Gokhale's Bill, with an element of compulsion in it, should be devised, and it should

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the Report of the 1882 Commission.

be adapted to the needs of the people,<sup>1</sup> for all higher education depends on sound lower education. At present the Indian college system is founded upon an untrustworthy foundation which is both too narrow and too shallow. The condition of the more primary institutions is disgraceful. Mr. Hornel, Director of Public Instruction in Bengal, has written as follows in *The Calcutta Review*<sup>2</sup> of the Calcutta Schools: "What in fact happens is something like this. I am thinking for the moment of schools for Indian children and not of schools for Europeans or Anglo-Indians. Schools are started very largely as private ventures in response to demands real or supposed. Those who start them house them wherever or howsoever they can, and in the case of a high English school, if a certain number of pupils can be got together and the standard of accommodation and general efficiency is not made too exacting, the running cost may be met and even a profit made. In the case of the primary schools the state of affairs is even more chaotic. A *pandit* or a *maulvi* appears and he sets himself to establish a primary school. He looks about for a habitat, and having found some building which is sufficiently cheap, he gets together a few pupils, and if he can retain these pupils for a certain time he goes to the Deputy Inspector and possibly to the Municipality and obtains a grant. In 1905 the Government of Bengal pointed out to the Municipality that the primary schools of the town were a disgrace, being dark, ill-ventilated, damp and unhealthy, and in most cases too small to accommodate the number of children attending them. A scheme was at the time proposed by which the Municipality with the help of Government should construct some forty-five model primary schools; but this

<sup>1</sup> I have been anxious to avoid making this chapter a mere summary of facts like the valuable *Quinquennial Education Reports* issued by the Indian Government. For statistics of literacy and illiteracy and such things, readers must go to these Reports. It is enough for me to say that primary education in India is in a miserably low condition. Only a little over 2 per cent. of the population attend schools of any kind.

<sup>2</sup> 1913, p. 308.

scheme was not carried into effect and the condition of the primary schools in Calcutta continues to be absolutely deplorable. The condition of secondary schools is very little better. Very few schools are situated in houses of their own, and practically none of them are accommodated in buildings constructed for schools."

The recommendations in the very earliest reports on the education of the masses have not yet been adopted by the Government.<sup>1</sup> But they are the basis of everything. The greatest efforts, supported by finance and a propaganda of opinion, should be made in conjunction with such societies as that of the Servants of India and with college authorities to get college youths to become teachers. Again, this will not succeed unless the system is devised with a large amount of freedom. The Government Inspector working on English models is not the man to do it. The Gurukul and the Bohlpur models are far better. Baroda results in compulsory attendance may be criticised, but they are worth sympathetic study. In India the teacher should feel his freedom and importance and not be constantly reminded of the hand of Government. India outside the large towns, outside the courts, outside the district magistrate's compound, is too diffuse and intangible to be inspired by a bureaucracy. The rebuilding of an education system in India must come from village councils, panchayets, local bodies, and all the difficulties and drawbacks of that must be faced and patiently overcome.

So long as efficient elementary education is lacking, Higher Schools will be crowded by pupils not fit to benefit by them—

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Howell in his *Education in British India*, written in 1872, commenting upon the Dispatches of 1854, 1859, and 1870 emphasising the need of primary education, says: "But so strongly opposed is this view to the traditional policy of the preceding forty years, that it has not yet in any Province been sufficiently realised. . . . It is not that the educational policy prescribed from England has been directly opposed; it simply has not been carried out, partly, I venture to think, owing to the strong tradition of former years, and partly perhaps owing to the direction given by the Education Departments recruited as a rule from men of English university distinction." Very little modification is required to bring this statement up to date.



pupils who whilst there, and subsequently whilst at College, drag down standards and defeat the best of teachers. When technical education was begun in London the same difficulties were experienced as the early reports of the Technical Education Board show, and in that comparatively small area, with plenty of money and institutions, with committees of the most enlightened educationalists, it has taken nearly a generation to master the problem.

The technical school should also be in the main a local institution linked up with Provincial colleges, and extended by scholarships sending promising men to Europe. But here again definite ideas are necessary. It is no use training men in the arts and crafts of Western industry unless the capital and organisation are forthcoming in India to provide scope for these men when they have finished their training. Do not let us repeat in technical training what we did in literary instruction, and encourage education to run away out of touch with India. Education and a country are companions. When they cease to keep in touch with each other they wander uselessly. We see year after year the spread of the large industry in India, but for many years to come it will not only be confined to one or two trades like jute and cotton, but will be an insignificant proportion of the whole volume of Indian production and consumption.<sup>1</sup> For generations the best technical work we can do for India is to revitalise her arts and crafts centred in her villages. The way to do this is obviously through the Co-operative Societies, which in places like Conjeeveram<sup>2</sup> are struggling to bring village industry to a new birth. Then there is agriculture, by far and away the premier industry in India, the most handed over to tradi-

<sup>1</sup> One of the results of regarding India as subordinate to foreigners in everything is the unwillingness to give Indians a fair chance even in Indian industry. For instance, frequent complaints are made that Indians of proved capacity are not trusted in the great Tata iron works.

<sup>2</sup> I mention this because I have seen it, and was much struck by the weaving workshop there.

tion and Providence, and the most difficult to improve by scientific practice. Here again what one has to say to the Government is: Decentralise and liberate! Devise an industrial policy to keep step with your educational one!

When one ultimately arrives at the college and university, one enters a stage of the controversy where the opportunity to reform is not quite so clear. It is difficult to scrap or even radically reform existing institutions, and the action of Government has so raised suspicion, and the educated Indian is so jealous of what he has secured, that a thorough university reform would meet with opposition, not on its merits or demerits, but because it was a change brought about by a Government which has given good reason for being treated as suspect. That was the case in 1904, when an Act full of sound proposals was prejudiced by Lord Curzon's injudicious conduct and speeches connected with it. The system of the federated college, part of which reaches one standard and part another standard, is bad; putting the teaching and professorial staff of a college into a Civil Service cadre is bad; making professors inspectors, and putting masters of one subject to teach another in order to suit departmental convenience, is bad;<sup>1</sup> mixing up in one bureaucratic service men of the most varied functions, and creating distinctions in title which represent no difference in work or attainments, is bad; the iron hand of the Government controlling colleges is bad; the division of staffs into

<sup>1</sup> One who has specialised in history should not be made "a lecturer in English philology, or a man who is believed to know physics, a lecturer in metaphysics." Evidence of P. T. Srinavas Iyengar Avayal, M.A., Principal of the M.A.V.N. College, Vizigapatam, to the Royal Commission on the Public Services of India. This is the self-confessed record of one of the English professors who was examined by this Commission: He took a second-class Classical Tripos at Cambridge and studied at Bonn and Paris. He was private secretary to a member of the Cabinet at home and went to India as head master of a public school. He was then made Professor of English, but had done the work of Professor of History and Economics, and had only taught Economics. He had no special training in Economics, but had read it in Aristotle. His evidence is not given in full in the official report. *Appendix to the Report of the Commissioners, Education Department.* Cd. 7908, 1915.

Imperial and Provincial grades is bad. Universities should be in the hands of free educationalists and not of Civil Servants, even if the latter are educationalists. There should be a sifting out of education which is not of a university standard from that which is, but that can be done only when there is a complete system built up from below. At present the first two years of a student's time at college are "devoted to what is really school work." But at whatever cost, the authorities should rigidly refuse to honour with a university stamp education which is clearly nothing more than higher elementary. There will be disappointment and opposition at first and the change cannot be made to-morrow. But if the authorities could only gain the confidence of the Indian educated community as regards their educational policy, they would receive its support in making the necessary changes. This can only be done under a system of self-government.

The three main grades of education, primary, secondary (including technical), and university, are not merely one coherent whole, but each grade has its own separate justification and completion contained within itself. A primary school should not call itself a high school nor a high school a college, and the various grades of teachers should understand and accept the importance and independence of their work. That is not the case in India, where the college dominates everything and where college badges and certificates are the only educational prizes that are sought for. During education a man must find absorbing pleasure amongst the treasures in the midst of which he wanders for the time being, and not be a long-distance runner whose eyes see only the far-away prize and applause, and who knows no lingering place short of that goal. This true educational psychology will never be that of India so long as its educational system is, as at present, an inverted pyramid resting on its college apex.

In the Benares Hindu university, to which I must again refer, the Government retains throughout the right of veto on most important matters, though it has surrendered its



nominated majority on the syndicate and does not retain, as in Calcutta for instance, its right to veto the appointment of professors. The powers of the Visitor, who is the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces *ex officio*, are extensive, but the important thing is that the University is to be governed by people who are not official representatives of the Government. It is to be national. It is to teach its own students, who are to be resident. Its religious atmosphere is to be Hindu. There can be no doubt that if this university is fortunate in its beginning, it will become the great seat of learning in India. Not the Government colleges, but this, will attract the Indian youth piously seeking knowledge, and the scholar piously teaching it. Here India has its chance of showing what is in it. But it must remember certain things from the very beginning. A university must not be brought down to low levels in order to accommodate youths who would like to have degrees, but whose education cannot carry them. A university must be bold even against Governments in forming its own life and in claiming its intellectual independence. A university must not be a golden gateway to office so much as a temple where men go for refreshment and guidance and equipment for living. A university must have a tradition, it must be a commune whose sovereignty is accepted by its students through life. And finally, a university is a place not where men are examined, but where they are educated. The Hindu University, of all Indian universities, has the best chance of following high ideals.

Then there is the question of women's education. The outside world assumes that woman is a negligible influence on Indian society. She is supposed to be ignorant, secluded, passive. She is nothing of the kind. She is either active with progress or active with reaction. She is either an encouraging help or a heavy handicap. She is never a mere nothing one way or the other. In India she is advancing fast and will go far, for in the generations of her apparent subordination she developed a very pretty will of her own.

It is significant that in Indian tales the woman is so often the predominant partner, the emancipated person, or the inspiring force. "There are more suffragettes in our homes than you imagine," said a Madras Brahmin to me.

The Indian woman will more and more demand education, for two reasons, both equally good, and the Government should support the demand for a reason which is also good. Women will ask to be educated because they desire to be educated, and because they wish to enter certain professions, chiefly those of nursing and medicine and teaching. So we have medical schools for women like the Lady Hardinge Hospital at Delhi, and the University for Women at Poona, supported by the Hindu Widows' Home Association. The Government must support these adventures not only because an educated womanhood will be good for India, but because it requires their help in both medical and teaching work. There is always a considerable demand for women teachers, and that ought to grow. Much of the private medical work in the more enlightened parts of the mofussil, especially the tending of women, must depend on women doctors, and upon the supply of competent women teachers will depend to a great extent how rapidly primary schools multiply.

Meanwhile the higher schools and colleges for women increase their number of students, and the women of certain sections of the community, like the Parsees, are beginning to rival the men in their education. The movement has started; it will not fail. The shortcoming is teachers—it is teachers, always teachers.

Thus India returns to itself like a wanderer who has roamed far but has found no rest.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

THE British Constitution is commonly assumed to rest upon law. The Legislature declares it, the Executive has then to accept it, and the Judiciary administers it. In this scheme the various functions remain independent, otherwise justice would not be done. In her symbolic representation, Justice is blindfold so that outside influences may not weigh with her. She is possessed of a mind apart from the world of convenience and passing motives. If she gave eye or ear to the Executive she could be impartial no longer, but would become a serving maid, and no one who entered a court would be sure of finding uprightness there.

In India, as elsewhere, justice rested in the King, who was enjoined by the law books to spend from a quarter to half of his time in the judgment seat, and who was specially charged to hear all cases concerning his own dignity and the State's security. He had also his judges, who acted in his name in a series of courts down to that over which the village headman presided, and these were supplemented by tribunals of corporations, trade guilds, and families with appropriate jurisdiction. The law, however, was not Statute Law, but a somewhat confused body of religious and secular rules supplemented by social custom, and in its administration the common sense—or the whim—of the judge, whether Chief Justice or village headman, played an important part. The judgments were largely of the nature of equity judgments. In a Golden Age of civil peace and political wisdom such a system would yield a maximum of justice, but in the ordinary world of



prejudice, interest, and falsehood it is both precarious and unjust. When we arrived, India was undergoing a general deterioration owing to political anarchy which we first of all fostered and then took advantage of, and the administration of justice suffered with every other social function.

Our own beginnings as magistrates and judges were not very happy. The early Charters of the Company show the factories in India to be extra-territorial as regards the administration of justice. Every one residing within the areas of Company jurisdiction was amenable not to the courts of sovereign authority, but to those of the Company, which were charged to administer justice based upon English law ; but the Charter of 1753 provided that the Mayors' Courts, as the British courts were called, should judge Indians only if their disputes involved Europeans or if the Indians of their own free will submitted themselves.

When the Company began to rule, and Parliament to watch, the administration of justice was seen to be the point where a check upon Company faults and failings could be most conveniently and effectively made. Justice was then under the real control of the Company and therefore subject to the general work of the administration. Clive, after having secured the Diwani grant, put civil justice into the hands of the British administrators, whilst criminal justice remained in those of the Nawab. Then Hastings came. He placed Europeans to preside over the Civil Courts, giving them Hindu and Mohammedan assessors, and he created a system of appeals. At the same time he established Criminal Courts of his own. Obviously this was an offence to the legal minds at Westminster. It was justice subordinate to the commercial interests and the peace of mind of the Company.

An independent judiciary was necessary, it was argued. So the Regulating Act set up the High Court at Calcutta as a Supreme Court of Appeal, a court which was admittedly to check the administration of the Company. The theory was admirable ; the practice displayed that lack of insight

into realities which was then preparing for us all our troubles in America with the loss of the Colonies. The history of the world that has still to be written contains the secret of what the end is to be, but the history that has been finished shows that when the English mind sets out to construct with a conscious and definite end in view, it is purely subjective in its thought, incapable of objective imagination, and innocent of any suspicion that what has worked in England may not work elsewhere, or that other nationalities have an evolution of their own. The success of the British consists in working unsystematised compromises and adaptations without much thought of to-morrow, and it may be that we are in consequence the chosen people amongst the earth's rulers. Our people's qualities cost them their American Colonies, however, and led them to pass the judicial clauses of the Regulating Act, which may be taken to be the beginning of the substitution of English court methods—the word “justice” must not be used, because “justice” is not a process but a conclusion—in India.

I dispute neither the necessity nor the value of the Calcutta High Court. Its work since its establishment has been a conspicuous vindication of the latter; its conflicts with a Government which has again and again sought political judgments and wished by its powers and the anathemas in the columns of its newspapers to inform the judges that, in its opinion, its censures ought to be taken as judgments and its convenience as law, have proved the former. But on its establishment, the High Court was set into an imperfect political constitution, and when asked to limit the political authority of the Company within constitutional bounds and the decision of its courts within law, neither the bounds nor the law had been adequately defined. The Company, however, was not a committee of British colonists ruling on the spot. It was itself a remote authority. The people of the country had not the least interest in constitutional blunders and they were spectators and not actors, so the

mistakes of the Court worked themselves out in friction and not in revolution. The newly appointed judges held high revelry in the china shop of Indian custom and Company interest.

Thus our first attempt to establish an independent Judiciary in India brought misfortune. A Supreme Court appointed by and responsible to the Crown, lower courts under the control of the Company, the Company and Parliament little short of being at constant loggerheads, was a condition of things bound to produce friction and opposition and not merely judicial independence. The Supreme Court began by assuming that it had been created to check the tyranny and injustice of the Company; it also assumed something that was much less well founded and might have led to serious trouble: that English law, and English law alone, was good enough for everybody on the face of the earth. Hence it is that the first chapter in the history of the independent Supreme Court at Calcutta is taken up wholly with the contest between itself and Warren Hastings, and it ended in discomfiture for the Judiciary owing to its own folly. The Company's administration—including all matters concerning the raising of revenue—was withdrawn from the Supreme Court, which was also instructed to judge Hindus and Mohammedans in accordance with their own laws when they were involved. The Company's Courts were recognised and two independent judicial systems therefore existed side by side, the Supreme Court being all the time in the unhappy frame of mind which came from the consciousness that it had not the power which properly belonged to it. It was isolated; the lower Courts and the machinery of justice were largely outside its influence; it had a too limited jurisdiction over British subjects; it was therefore not only jealous, but aggressive. Finally, when the Crown took over India, the judicial systems were merged into one. The Supreme Courts became High Courts, but to this day they retain the condition of mind and the reputation, especially in Calcutta, that they should set a watch upon



Executive action, and one is constantly hearing complaints, in connection with political cases in particular, that the High Courts are not sufficiently sympathetic with government difficulties. In India there is some confusion of mind on this constitutional point, and a great section of officials supported by Anglo-Indian opinion cannot understand why the persons who sit on the bench should take no account of government difficulties, and should refuse to stretch the process of justice so as to admit the influence of political opinion. They cannot understand why the thief-catcher with his full knowledge of the thief should be disqualified from being the judge in the case he knows so well, and why he should not use his general knowledge to supplement the evidence before him in deciding whether an accusation is well founded or not.

The greater number of judges, justices, and magistrates are Indians. The lower courts are exclusively manned by Indians—the munsifs, the subordinate judges, the deputy magistrates, and so on, through a variety of titles differing in different provinces, but all included in what, at the time when this is written, is called the Provincial Services.<sup>1</sup> The superior judicial appointments mainly belong to the Indian Civil Service. The collector, in addition to his revenue and administrative duties, exercises general control over the police, and he also supervises the work of the Courts in his district, and acts as District Magistrate. In fact, on him is focused all the authority which deals with law and order in his District, and he has to see, both on the criminal and the civil side, to the smooth running of the mechanism of justice. Above all are the High Courts with an appeal to the Privy Council. On the bench of these Courts must be at least one-third barristers of England or Ireland, or members of the Faculty of Advocates of Scotland, at least one-third members of the Indian Civil Service, and the others must be qualified persons who

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Commission on the Public Services of India has recommended that this designation should be used no longer.

have held subordinate judicial positions and who have practised at the Bar of the High Court. Throughout the whole of these higher judicial services, Indians are to be found.<sup>1</sup> There used to be a considerable number of Europeans practising at the Indian Bar, but they tend to disappear. They find that Indians have gained possession and keep possession. The best Indian mind is a subtle instrument which makes the most out of the human frailty which every law-maker's work must show. It is really too ingenious. It often confuses rather than persuades, but it is never at a loss for excuses or explanations. I sometimes think that the real explanation of the way in which the Indian youth took to the Bar as a post of high honour and emolument is the natural delight of the young Indian in verbal art. And yet when we check our impressions of the popularity of the Bar by figures, we see how easy it is to get exaggerated notions into our heads. There are fifty-three million persons returned in the last Indian census (1911) as being engaged in the professions and liberal arts. "Religion accounts for rather more than half, letters and the arts and science for more than a sixth, instruction and medicine for one-eighth, and law for one-eighteenth," but only a little over one-half of these are lawyers, the remainder being clerks, petition writers, law agents, etc. At

<sup>1</sup> The Royal Commission on the Public Services in India elicited interesting information as to the position of Indians in the Judicial Service. In the Presidency of Madras, four out of the ten High Court judges are Indians; of twenty-two District and Session judges outside the town of Madras, six are Indians; the twenty-four subordinate judges are all Indians. "Practically the whole of the original civil suits of the country up to Rs. 2,500 in value and six-sevenths of the original suits above that value, and considerably more than half of all the civil appeals, were disposed of by Indians. On the other hand, the bulk of the highest criminal work is still in the hands of Europeans, the proportion being about three-fourths of the Session cases and nearly four-fifths of the higher Criminal Appeals" (*Madras Evidence*, Cd. 7293, p. 5). It will always be a matter of profound regret to Englishmen that the English in India passionately opposed every attempt to repose confidence in Indian judges; and it should be a warning to us, so long as our faithlessness needs it, that when that confidence was imposed upon them, none of our fears ever came true.

the bottom end, the lawyer shades off into a low type of his profession and makes his living by encouraging litigation, and often employs agents to procure him business. Above that, and especially at the top, he is as good an example of his profession as is to be found anywhere. When he becomes a judge he does his work well and his conduct has long ago removed any suspicion of corruption which used to stick to him.<sup>1</sup>

Something akin to a tradition has grown up in India that the Executive influences—or would like to influence—the Courts, and the expressed opinions of some executive officers give an excuse for that view. In the days of the Company the Company's courts were Company's tools. In the House of Commons, General Burgoyne said of Company justice—"The laws of England have been mute and neglected, and nothing has been seen but the arbitrary caprice of despotism."<sup>2</sup> To this day that frame of mind has not altogether departed from the Executive. The red-tape of the Judiciary often thwarts its political projects. It cannot see why the political mind should not be on the Bench as it has to be at the Secretariat. The executive officer makes up his mind about a man not on proof alone, but on what seems to him to be likelihood or possibility. His business is not to adjudicate upon what has been done or what has happened, but upon what is likely, in his opinion, to be done or to happen. The judge knows but little of likelihood. He has to make up his mind about evidence and he has to interpret and apply the law. He has to approach a case with a mind free from all the impressions regarding it which must be stamped deeply

<sup>1</sup> "The Lord Chancellor did not give the Native judges too high a character when he said in the House of Lords in 1883, as the result of his experience of Indian cases appealed to the Privy Council, that in respect of integrity, of learning, of knowledge, of the soundness and satisfactory character of the judgments arrived at, the judgments of the Native judges were quite as good as those of the English" (Strachey, *India*, p. 162). Sir John Strachey goes even farther than that in his own praise.

<sup>2</sup> Hansard, 1772, p. 535.



on the mind of the executive officer. His outlook and function make him regard society as static; the outlook and function of the executive officer make him regard society as dynamic. Thus, apart from any taint of corrupt dealing or of any desire on the part of the Executive to rule tyrannically or to use the Judiciary as its tool, or of any question as to whether the executive officer can be properly trained for, or have time to give to, judicial work, the executive and judicial mind are at enmity.

Here we see unfolded what is the source of the long-drawn-out controversy upon the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive in India. In India the District is the unit of administration, and all the strings of that administration are gathered up in the hands of that wonderful functionary, the Collector-Magistrate. He represents the political government. He looks after land and other revenue, and local government; he keeps the general machinery of government going. He is accepted as the ruling sahib of his little Empire. He is the chief magistrate with control over all subordinate courts, with power to try original and appeal cases himself, to transfer cases from one court to another, and to take what steps he likes to prevent or suppress crime and disturbance. He, as magistrate, can discipline and punish those with whom he has come into conflict as political executive officer. These are his powers. In a memorial sent in 1899 to Lord George Hamilton and signed by Lord Hobhouse and several other judges of Indian experience, the Collector's powers are described as "the strange union of constable and magistrate, public prosecutor and criminal judge, revenue collector and appeal court in revenue cases." He may not exercise them, indeed he has less and less time to do so, and his criminal work diminishes. His magisterial decisions are also subject to the Session judge, and he himself to the High Court. But none of these considerations affect the real issue. It is very short-sighted wisdom to endow an office with powers which, if used, would be dangerous, but which are given or retained on the ground

that they will not be, are or not being, used. It is plainly the duty, as it is in accord with the habits, of the British Government to give Indian officers powers for the use of which they are responsible ; to revise from time to time the nominal duties of officers ; to clear away rotten wood ; to prevent duplication and conflict of functions and to adjust the machinery and administration to changing circumstances. Nor is it enough to provide for an appeal. If the system is wrong every decision may be wrong, so that justice demands that every decision should be tested by an appeal. Under such circumstances the original decision might as well not have been given, and the case should have been brought to the Appeal Court in the first instance.

The union of executive and judicial functions in the Collector does not mean the same thing in every province, nor has it always existed in British India. It exists no longer in the Presidency towns. In Madras, the separation of the two functions has been effected in the lower grades ; in Bengal, it now obtains in the provincial service, and special deputies are being appointed to try certain land and other suits ; in Burma, the growth of judicial and executive duties has led to differentiation and separation. This differentiation owing to the amount of work to be done is showing itself generally.<sup>1</sup> When Warren Hastings had to handle the problem of how to turn the Company into a Government and its servants into rulers, obviously the first necessity was to give his district officers all the authority of an oriental potentate. Divided power was to be avoided. The governing will could not risk being checked or revised. It had to be free to come to its own conclusions and also to enforce them. So Hastings united executive and judicial authority in one officer—the District Collector. The House of Commons, however, was watching. It approached such a phenomenon as the Executive-Judge not merely with the principles of the British Constitution in mind, but jealousy of the Company as well,

<sup>1</sup> *Report on the Public Services of India*, 1917, pp. 194-196.

and its view was that whilst the Company might be allowed a revenue to conduct the general affairs of political administration, the Crown ought to see that justice was done. According to this view, not only should there be a division between the Executive and Judiciary, but the Judiciary should keep a watchful eye upon the self-willed Executive. As has been stated, Hastings won in the conflict, and, like so many great men, he saw the other man's point of view. Therefore, when he had established his mastery he proceeded to show that he saw his mistakes and separated the Collector's functions. It was too soon, however. Circumstances were against him. A system of balances, of checks, of brakes, can be worked only if in every one concerned there is a sincere desire to work it, or if the opportunities it gives to create confusion or deadlocks are not taken. It was otherwise in India. Checks and counter-checks were worked by people at enmity against each other, and when Lord Cornwallis went out he had instructions from the Court of Directors to go back upon the system which Hastings had latterly adopted, and concentrate power in the hands of the Collector. Thus once more the Collector became revenue officer, political administrator, magistrate, and civil judge. Then this did not work, and civil judicial work was taken from the Collector. From that time there have been changes backwards and forwards,<sup>1</sup> but there have steadily emerged the principles that civil judicial authority should be taken from the Collector, as it was really not of any advantage to him as ruler to exercise it, but that criminal and magisterial authority should remain with him so that he might keep full control of everything concerned with law and order.

For a long time the Government of India frankly confessed that the union of the two functions was only a temporary expedient, and the opinions now so prevalent in the service, that it is good in itself, are of comparatively modern

<sup>1</sup> For a history of these changes see *The Question of Judicial and Executive Separation*, pt. 1, by P. C. Miller, M.A., D.L.



growth and are not even now held by some of the most distinguished administrators.<sup>1</sup> The view that the Collector is ruler over a district for the order, as well as good government, of which he is responsible, and that therefore he should retain the authority of a magistrate controlling the police force and the criminal courts of his District, is the best that can be taken in favour of the union of the two functions. But it supports the union only up to a point. It affords no reason why the Collector should have judicial powers, though it may decide that he should be at the head of the police. Indeed, it is most objectionable that the officer responsible for collecting evidence and prosecuting through the police should be the judge who tries the case,<sup>2</sup> or that the head of the police should be a magistrate who is also the head of the district criminal courts.

Underlying this argument, however, is the feeling that some kind of general authority is necessary for the Collector's "prestige." We are always being told that the "East" needs this, that, and the other extraordinary conduct in order that it may understand things. The "East," however, changes, and the political habits and practices of the old time of personal and despotic rule have become as historical as our own trial by ordeal. Great masses remain in that historical condition, but these masses do not determine the modes of modern government, provide a public opinion as a foundation for it, vindicate it when it is attacked, support it

<sup>1</sup> For instance, during the debate on the Police Bill in 1860, Sir Bartle Frere, who was in charge of the Bill, said that he personally would be only too pleased to have made "a still more complete severance of the police and judicial functions," and the Committee which in 1881 revised the Code of Criminal Procedure reported that the Bengal Government had asked it to omit the section conferring police powers on Bengal magistrates. The Committee said on its own behalf: "We consider that it is inexpedient to invest magistrates with such powers." Finally, in 1908, Sir Harvey Adamson, as Home member of the Viceroy's Council, promised to separate the two functions in Bengal and Eastern Bengal, but the promise was not fulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> This point was specially emphasised by the Police Commission which reported in 1860. See paragraph 37 of its report.

against criticism. The Government must protect these passive masses, but it must adopt methods of doing so which do not lay it open to the assaults of that active body of public opinion which can fight it with its own weapons. Sir Harvey Adamson's conclusion is correct. Discussing the prestige argument, he said in 1908 : " The combination of functions in such a condition of society (when ordinary legal processes are possible) is a direct weakening of the prestige of the Executive."

We must assume that magistrates belonging to an independent branch of the administration will be as inspired as executive officers to stamp out crime, and though they may not be willing to consider suspicion or probability as proof, and to use their authority to prevent something evil from happening before the proof that it is to happen is established, that, on the balance, will probably add to the amount of justice done, and consequently to public tranquillity. There can be no doubt but that the present condition invites suspicion and gratuitously puts stones into the slings of Indian critics. As Sir Harvey Adamson again said during that Budget debate in 1908 : " The inevitable result of the present system is that criminal trials affecting the general peace of the district are not always conducted in the atmosphere of cool impartiality which should pervade a court of justice. Nor does this completely define the evil, which lies not so much in what is done, as in what may be suspected to be done ; for it is not enough that the administration of justice should be pure ; it can never be the bedrock of our rule unless it is also above suspicion."

It is contended that the separation will impose a heavier cost upon Indian revenues. Even supposing this were true<sup>1</sup> and that the expense would be so great as to make a real difference, cheapness cannot justify a bad system. If suspicion

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, whilst District Magistrate, drew up a scheme which, by a reorganisation of the staff, secured all that was wanted without any extra expense. Other similar schemes have been devised.

about judicial decisions can be removed at the cost of a few thousand pounds a year, the end will be cheaply bought.

This is an old problem. It has been inquired into and reported upon again and again ;<sup>1</sup> it has been debated times without number ; it has been the subject of innumerable resolutions. It is in reality the battle-ground of those who regard justice as being no justice at all unless it is without suspicion, and those who relate justice to expediency and connect judicial authority with the political ends of an executive. Consequently the accumulation of cases of injustice done owing to the system is important, but is not decisive. On the one hand, some injustice is done under the best of systems ; on the other hand, the failure to prove that injustice has been done under an obviously bad system does not make a reform of the system unnecessary. So I will not burden my pages with the charges that have been made against the Collector as District Magistrate.<sup>2</sup> Replies have been made to them, and counter-replies made again. That the subordinate magistrates are controlled by executive officers, that judicial promotion depends upon the good-will of officers who are frequently parties to suits, is a bad system, and if it has enough luck to avoid indictment by the production of a great array of instances of miscarriages of justice, that is no matter ; it remains a system that will not be accepted, will not emerge from its enveloping cloud of suspicion, and ought to be changed.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Committee upon Bengal Police*, 1838 ; *Police Commission*, 1860, etc., etc., also *The Question of Judicial and Executive Separation*, by P. C. Miller, M.A., D.L.

<sup>2</sup> In an appendix to the memorial presented to the Secretary of State in 1899, signed by some of the most eminent Englishmen who had served on the Indian Bench, including men who had been Chief Justices of Bengal and Bombay, and Lord Hobhouse, who had been Law Member of the Viceroy's Council, some of these cases of palpable injustice are given, " cases which, it is thought, illustrate in a striking way some of the dangers that arise from the present system." Various Indian lawyers and organisations have also published from time to time collections of such cases. That they have been numerous and have been in the main attributable to the system is not open to doubt.



Nor has another kind of argument, still based upon expediency, any value. It is said that the executive officer during his dozen years' apprenticeship comes into the very closest personal contact with the life of the people and gains such a thorough knowledge of their habits and ways that it would be a waste of this knowledge if Government did not use it on the bench. Assuming the statement to be true, which I do only for argument's sake, what is its meaning? We send men out to administer Indian affairs, and we start them as subordinates in country districts where they get to know something of the people. In the course of their apprenticeship they develop an interest in the administration of the law and have peculiar opportunities for becoming wise judges. To that there is no objection. Let them become judges if they are fit. Whether or not civilians should be able to pass into the Judiciary at an early period of their service is the only question that this argument raises, and it has little to do with the union of the Executive and Judiciary at certain points and in certain officers.

Nor has a much more important matter very much to do with it—that there should always be a number of civilians on High Court benches. A man of common sense and logical faculty who has some knowledge of the law can make a great judge and dispense justice. In India he will perhaps be troubled by barristers of unusual subtlety of intellect, but if he is firmly placed on his common sense he need not fear that. So there have been great civilian judges and magistrates. It is the custom at home to select the Bench from the Bar, but if it had been otherwise, and other walks of life giving chances for judicial qualities had also been tapped for this purpose, probably the result on the whole would not have been bad. But the question that we ask of the Indian Judiciary is: why must Civil Servants sit on the High Court Bench? And the only real answer is that in the interests of the service it has been so decreed. The service must have its offices and its dignities. Once again, it is not necessary to prove

inefficiencies<sup>1</sup> (though these are frequently alleged) ; we need only prove that it is not in the fitness of things, that it is something done by decree which of itself is not natural, that it is suspect because it introduces upon the Bench interests, points of view, frames of mind, methods and associations which at once suggest, to the unsophisticated mind, bias and aims and purposes other than those of a blindfolded justice.

Naturally in India there is much opposition from the Bar to the existing arrangement. It alleges that the civilian has not enough legal training to entitle him to be a judge or magistrate, that he has less respect for the law as such than a desire to secure political aims, that the system is a violation of that which has made British justice what it is. The case is difficult to reply to. Even if the civilians have the making of great judges in them, they should make a more respectable beginning on the Bench than muddling through the lower judicial offices.

No one can well resist the conclusion that it is desirable that the separation should take place, and the Civil Service should become purely executive in its work. Perhaps for the first year or two of service it may be possible for a man to choose whether his later life is to be spent on either the executive or judicial side. He should then, however, have to choose early and undergo the proper training if he takes the latter. We should be wrong to assume that the British method of taking judges from the Bar comparatively late in life is the only satisfactory one. It has many advantages, but it has some disadvantages, and the method of putting younger men on the Bench and promoting them to higher responsibilities has much to be said for it. But that is not involved in this old topic of controversy. When there was no efficient Bar in India, when there was no critical legal opinion there, when there was one man in the midst of a great district which he had to govern of his own will, the union of the two great

<sup>1</sup> The list of bad judges on our own Bench is not a short one and every generation makes additions to it.

functions of government—the executive and judiciary—in one service was not only possible, but may have been imperative. India has now outlived those conditions, however.

This, important though it be, both in its judicial and its political aspects, is not the only big question raised by the administration of British law in India. We have codified the law, we have introduced a legal method with a tolerable amount of certainty in its working, we have purified the Bench and have made bribery a thing of the past—at any rate in the higher grades. But we have destroyed native Indian justice in precisely the same way as we destroyed native Indian education, and if we say that both were bad we are not really answering the charge, because both education and justice belong to the culture of a people and foreign systems cannot be transplanted with impunity.

The Hindu is said to have been litigious always, and judicial statistics are really appalling. There are over 2,000,000 civil suits every year, about three-fourths of which arise over money and movable property affairs, and one-fifth relate to rent. No less than 290,000 suits relate to sums of ten rupees and under, and well over a million are disputes about fifty rupees and under. About one-tenth of the cases go to appeal. The Indian regards the courts as some people regard Monte Carlo. It is difficult for English people to understand the Indian psychology as regards this, and in consequence it is difficult to get them to see what has happened as a result of the introduction of our legal methods. In our historical evolution, the court has come to be the place where one seeks justice, not where one pursues chances; and as we are a people in whose solid minds justice means something real in respect to our relationships with each other, the function of the court is to vindicate and secure. If we, however, can imagine a people in whose minds a sense of justice is more rudimentary (say a society of usurers) and only a keen intelligence dominates certain classes of relationships (say borrowings



and debts), or if we can imagine a people accustomed to regulate their affairs by accommodation and convenience less than by contract and obligation, it is easy to see that courts in such a Society would not perform exactly the same function as in ours, and that the security of right would not be so much in evidence formally taken, and in law interpreted in the letter by lawyers and judges, as in a much rougher process of equity based upon common knowledge and common sense. This is an explanation of what has taken place in India. The officers in touch with the people felt this difference between India and England, and proposed to maintain a system of justice which was of course anathema to legal minds—both British and Indian—working on the assumptions of the West. These latter minds prevailed, because, however true was the insight of the conservatives, they, as aliens and as representatives of a system of which Western courts were an indissoluble part, occupied a weak position and could make their case good only by attacking some of the essential assumptions of Western administration in India and of Indian minds trained in Western ways. So the British courts and British legal processes were transplanted, and behold, the society into which they came being very different to that from which they came and into which they fitted, they did not fit and they did not function as with us. They had to accommodate themselves and to be accommodated to the alien society in which they were to work.

I have referred to the first false start of the Supreme Court when it decided to apply its British law to all Indians. That was a gross error, and consequently could easily be corrected. But there were more subtle things which had to be done and could not be corrected. For instance, the relationship between borrower and moneylender in India was a historical product of custom and depended on the fact that it was defined by custom. When this became a legal relationship and the subject of definitions so precise that they could be enforced in courts, and be applied not in customary ways but legally, obviously what happened was not a mere

formal transference of customary habit to written law, but a complete revolution in the relationship of borrower to money-lender, and, as this relationship very largely kept cultivation going throughout India, the revolution affected the working of Indian society.

This can best be illustrated in the case of land legislation. It used to be that the village bunnia was nothing but the financial agent of the cultivator who took his crops at a price and advanced him what he wanted to meet his obligations. As the cultivator had no realisable property, the bunnia regarded him as a going concern and his security was the next harvest. Therefore he had no interest in allowing his client to run into debt or to ruin him. All that changed, however. British legal ideas not only established the cultivator on a more definite relationship to his land, but introduced also a more definite relationship between him and his bunnia. The *vakil*, or country lawyer, came in to interpret that relationship because it had become technical; and the moneylender, knowing probably what had happened at the beginning of the nineteenth century when Bengal moneylenders acquired the Orissa estates upon which they had issued mortgages, and in any event feeling the common land hunger, proceeded to employ British justice to acquire landed property. I do not concern myself with his tricky methods, with the amount of his interest or the provisions of his mortgage deeds. I concern myself with the legal and judicial changes of which he took advantage and which altered village relationships as completely and as unfortunately as the Permanent Settlement changed relationships in Bengal.

Again and again the operation of strict legal processes has brought whole communities to the verge of ruin and the State to the edge of serious disorder. This was the case in the Deccan when the Agriculturalists' Relief Act had to be passed in 1879, and again in the Punjab when the Land Alienation Act had to be passed in 1900, amidst a fury of conflicting views and interests. The story is interesting. When the

Punjab was annexed the land was restored to the people and a reasonable land revenue was fixed. The land of the Punjab was to be the nursery of brave soldiers. But the brave men were thriftless men, as brave men so frequently are; our Revenue was a rigid impost; the moneylender became essential to both the cultivator and the Government. But we, in the justice of our heart, protected the debtor by providing that debts that were to be recoverable after three years and up to six had to be registered. This introduced the lawyer, first of all, for registration itself, and, later on, for the court proceedings that followed. When the land surveys were completed and local courts were set up consequent upon the creation of a chief court for the Province, all the definitions and the precisions necessary for litigation and seizure were complete and the machinery was ready to operate. The lamb had been supplied with a wolf to help it. Our officers began to see what was happening, but the Government could not understand how a pure and mechanically equitable system of justice could do anything but punish the wrongdoers and protect the oppressed. As a matter of fact both law and lawlessness are alike in this: they side with those who can take the best advantage of them.

The Punjab courts became blocked with business and supplementary ones had to be established. But the bigger the output, the more was the demand. The game went fast and furious, and the bunnias jostled each other and blocked the courts in their haste to become landowners. In 1886 an official inquiry was ordered, and it revealed an alarming state of indebtedness and an alarming number of sales. It took fourteen years to get legislation, and then it came only because there was a usurious scandal brought to light, and because the threatened cultivators were getting out of hand and were dealing with the bunnias in the old extra-legal way by assault and battery. In the end, non-agriculturalists were prohibited from acquiring land from agriculturalists.

Whoever surveys in a broad sweep the results of our judicial



system in India will therefore not see the unqualified operation of a mechanism of protection for the innocent, but a complete transformation of social relationships. And if in his sweep he includes the criminal courts he will find similar results. The corruption of the police, the manufacture of evidence, the concoction of accusations, have too often made the courts weapons in the hands of the evildoer, who, so far from regarding them as a terror, has annexed them as a weapon. To strike at any enemy by falsely accusing him in court, and providing witnesses to support the accusation, is by no means a rare thing in India. That which concerns itself with matters of justice may also be used to deal out injustice; and the abuse does not necessarily depend on the character of judges (which for a long time has been quite good in India), but upon the possibility of manipulating the processes adopted. Every advantage is taken of this. A specially low type of advocate and agent has arisen, extraordinarily high charges are piled up, every permissible process of application and appeal is resorted to, and the law drags on its snail-like pace to its uncertain end. "I fancy few of us Government officers," wrote a specially competent member of the Service, "realised what a fearful advantage our system of law courts gave to the rich man over the poor. It placed the poor man at the rich man's mercy."<sup>1</sup> In the end, the court of law comes to be looked at from a totally different angle of vision to what it is here. So it cannot be said that British justice is really appreciated in India, and any one who visits Indian courts as I have done must feel how different they are to our own. The Indian has a suspicion that much of his poverty and his land trouble is due to them, and he would be quite content to accept decisions come to much more simply and would probably question them much less ruefully in his heart.

But we cannot return to what has been destroyed. The traditions have been broken and the alien methods have now

<sup>1</sup> *The Little World of an Indian District Officer*, by R. Carstairs, p. 92.

fixed themselves into Indian life, and it is one of the real dangers of an enfranchised and politically dominant educated class under self-government that the system will be developed on its bad side, and full advantage taken of its opportunities to exploit the cultivator and reduce him to the status of a mere tenant at will. A truly great Indian ruler would judiciously withdraw from the entangling nets of courts and court processes the greater proportion of those petty cases by which they are now stuffed, and the numerous disputes between the bunnia and the ordinary cultivator, and leave them to be dealt with by village tribunals like panchayets, whilst, by developing co-operative credit and enterprise, he would seek to remove the evils which the adaptation of British judicial methods to India has done so much to intensify. Then he could cheapen and hasten justice without running the risks of increasing litigation. Then would the great blessing of honesty in administration which the British connection has contributed to the Indian Judiciary remain to receive the gratitude of the people.

## CHAPTER XV

### INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

THE Indian is proud to belong to the British Empire. Its greatness appeals to his love of pageantry, and its very remoteness from him endows it with a majesty which in all soberness does not belong to it. We pride ourselves on the peace and justice we have given to India, but they form only a barren soil for gratitude. The Empire appeals to the Indian's imagination and creates in him the spirit of loyalty. To be a citizen of such an Empire supplements and modifies his ideas of nationality. But to him British citizenship means more than the circumstances warrant. He regards the Empire as a homogeneous whole, governed from a centre, with common liberties and rights of citizenship. South Africa and Australia, he thinks, ought to be as much his native political soil as Madras or Burma. I was in India during the troubles between Indians and the Union Government of South Africa in 1913, and I found that this assumption of Imperial homogeneity, with Parliament as the supreme authority, was universally made. It not only did service on platforms, but in private conversation. To try to correct it seemed to be robbing the Indian of one of his most treasured possessions and wounding him in his most sensitive parts. Immediately after the Indian trouble in South Africa came the high-handed deportation from that country of certain labour leaders, and the revelation of the impotence of the House of Commons in protecting the liberties of white men in the Dominions made an understanding of the constitutional position easier to Indians. Up to then there was a widespread opinion in India



that the Home Government was careless of Indian rights and shared the prejudices of South Africa, but the deportations showed that a mere neglect of Indian interests and a disregard of Indian sensitiveness were not the cause of Imperial impotence in the control of Dominion policy. The Indians were taught that British citizenship was not what they imagined it to be.

That Indians wish to claim a full Imperial citizenship is shown by the case of the *Komagata Maru*. This ship was dispatched with 400 Indians on board from Shanghai in 1914 to deposit its passengers at Vancouver and thus challenge the validity of the Canadian immigration laws and test the right of Indians as British subjects to land in Canada. The promoters of the expedition were characterised by the Viceroy in the Legislative Council<sup>1</sup> as "culpably responsible," but, whether that is so or not, this is surely a case where motives count for everything, and here the motive was wholly reasonable and praiseworthy. It was precisely the same motive as was making India at the time rally to the Empire's standard in the European war. The Canadian Courts upheld the law, the Indians were deported, and after suffering and trouble got home aggressively discontented.

The self-government enjoyed by our Dominions limits the scope and meaning of British citizenship. Economic and geographical circumstances have led the Dominions to adopt certain protective policies directed to securing the purity of the white race and a high standard of living, and this double intention has produced a series of immigration laws which must offend the Indian.

I was in British Columbia shortly after the first batch of Indian emigrants—mostly Sikhs—landed there in 1905, and I remember the disturbed feelings which then existed. But it was said they would not be a success. They were manual labourers chiefly engaged, if I remember aright, as wood porters, and it was supposed that the work was too hard for

<sup>1</sup> September 8th, 1914.

them. But they stayed, and their numbers reached 6,000 in about a year. They became agriculturalists too, and began to amass property. By 1907 British Columbia became alarmed, and pressed the Dominion Government to take action. Next year, Mr. Mackenzie King, the Deputy Minister for Labour at Ottawa, came to London to discuss with the Imperial authorities the question of further Indian immigration. The points he urged were that Indians were not suited for Canada, and could not really settle there without much suffering and privation, and that their presence in Canada as low-paid workers might reduce white standards of living and lead to trouble. In the end, in 1910, Orders in Council were issued prohibiting the landing of Asiatics in Canada unless they possessed of their own right 200 dollars, and had come direct and on a ticket issued in the country of their birth or citizenship. This is one of those politically crooked ways of doing something which one does not wish to do straightforwardly. There is no direct communication between India and Canada, so the effect of the Orders was to prohibit further Indian immigration. The wives and children of emigrants already settled in Canada were subject to the Orders. The result has been that the Indian population has fallen from 6,000 to 4,500. Whilst this has been going on, Chinese and Japanese have entered Canada under treaty rights and less restrictive legislation. The Japanese can enter if possessed of 50 dollars; the Chinese, on paying a tax of 500 dollars. They can take wives and children with them, but only three Indian women have been allowed in as an act of grace. The position is summed up by a writer in an Indian review as follows :<sup>1</sup> "The result is that the Japanese and Chinese, who are the subjects of a foreign Government, are admitted on easy terms, while Indians, who own allegiance to the same King-Emperor, are in practice entirely excluded. It is a cruel irony of fate that British citizenship should be a disqualification in Canada." Out of these circumstances arose the *Komagata*

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Review*, February 1915.

*Maru* case, and then the war stifled the agitation for the time being.

The South African case was the most famous, as it not only brought the Indians of South Africa into serious conflict with the Government, but called for the employment of great diplomatic and official skill in its settlement. Indians went to South Africa first of all in 1860 as indentured labourers on Natal sugar plantations, and when their indentures expired they settled in the country and began to engage in petty trade. They were not only made welcome, but it was recognised that without them important Natal industries could not be carried on. The opposition which, however, speedily grew up against them was both racial and economic, the first being most conspicuous in the Transvaal, where the most degrading requirements were demanded of them, and where they were "classed with thieves, prostitutes, and other undesirables." The economic opposition was the moving impulse in Natal. When I was in Durban in 1902, complaints were loud against their presence, and invariably the reason given was that they were ousting their white competitors in trades like those of dealing in fruit and fowls. Similar complaints made in the Transvaal were used to justify the passing of the restrictive legislation of 1885, which was held up to our ill-informed people at home as one of the justifications for the Boer War.

In the autumn of 1906 the passive resistance movement began in South Africa owing to the introduction of a grievous Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, and over 2,500 Indians were speedily sent to prison. Devastation seemed to have fallen on the community. Men of substance cheerily suffered ruin, women stood by the men, families were broken and homes destroyed. But with a courage and determination which have not yet received due praise, the Indians stood to their oath and their fellows. Europeans who backed them shared in their prosecutions. Then negotiations opened, promises were made by the Government, and the Indians consented to resume their usual avocations and wait a redress of



grievances. The promises were broken. A Bill embodying them was drafted but never passed. There were squabbles as to the conditions of the promise. Then Mr. Gokhale visited South Africa, and there were again squabbles as to what had been said to him. The Immigration Act of 1913, to which the Indians took strong exception, reopened the conflict, and there was nothing for it but that the Indians should again resort to resistance. The usual prosecutions and persecutions followed and serious rioting broke out. The scandal was too disgraceful to be borne. South Africa was carrying its right of self-government to lengths which were offensive to British notions. A brave and opportune pronouncement on the subject by Lord Hardinge, much censured at the time in some quarters and certainly employing a freedom of criticism hitherto unknown, allayed the feeling in India, and a Commission was appointed to report upon the whole matter.<sup>1</sup> Ultimately legislation was carried, aided by the changed feelings which came with the war, and there is now peace.<sup>2</sup>

Australia also prohibits the free entry of Indians.<sup>3</sup>

The exclusion policy of our Dominions was felt all the more keenly by Indians because it was also being pursued by the United States, and the Imperial Government could not object to a foreign Government doing what its own Dominions were doing.

Just as the last century was closing, Indian labourers appeared on the American Pacific Coast. They had wandered eastwards through Burma, the Malay Straits, China, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Indian Inquiry Commission*, Cd. 7265, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> As this book goes to the press, it looks as though the trouble were to break out again. The European competitors in trade never accepted the settlement, and in June 1919 a Bill was introduced into the Union Parliament, making it illegal for Indians to acquire gold-properties unless they held them on May 1, 1919, and also extending the provisions of the Oppressive Act of 1885 so that not only individual Asiatics were forbidden to hold real property, but companies in which Asiatics "have a controlling interest." The second provision was in the end omitted, but the whole controversy, including the question of the good faith of the Government, has apparently been reopened.

<sup>3</sup> In round figures there are 3,000 Indians in Canada and 5,000 in Australia; 8,000 were annually recruited under indenture for colonies.

Philippines, and when they came to America at last, they found an anti-Chinese and -Japanese agitation on foot. The American workmen regarded the first Indian arrivals as the pioneers of a new invasion of cheap labour and low living standards. For years opposition grew, inspired by the Trade Unions, and at length in 1907 rioting broke out in the State of Washington, and attempts were made to rule Indians out of the benefits of American citizenship. This has been practically done.

Elsewhere, as in Trinidad and British Guiana, Jamaica and Fiji, an utterly pernicious system of indentured coolie labour has prevailed, devastating to the bodies and the souls of Indians, attended in particular by wholesale prostitution. This has been the subject of several important official and unofficial reports which have roused the greatest resentment in India, with the result that indentured emigration has now been prohibited.

These impediments and prohibitions are, as a matter of fact, and are keenly felt by Indians to be, a grievous insult to their race. Since the war began, certain colonial newspapers have been writing in a more reasonable tone about Indian immigration, but I doubt if the prejudices and the arguments against it have been allayed in any great measure in consequence of anything that has happened during the war. The emotion of a white Australia, the fears of highly paid labour, racial antagonism, are all likely to persist and to make themselves felt in the future as they have done in the past. If India had a sufficient power of self-government to deal with the matter itself, it would settle it in its own way and would probably devise some scheme of economic retaliation against offending States, whilst prohibiting emigration under improper conditions. The whole question, however, broadens itself out into a conflict between the Asiatic and the European races, and the champion on the Asiatic side will be Japan and not India—the actual problem will be the Chinaman and not the Hindu. Into what proportions it is to develop, who can say ?

Regarding the conflicts which it is to raise, who can prophesy ? This, however, no one who knows the facts can doubt. Asia will not submit to exclusion from the North American Continent and the islands of the Pacific Seas, and therefore exclusion is as short-sighted as it is unjust. It is accumulating a weight of resentment which will one day be let loose and perhaps be the signal for the greatest conflict which the world has ever known.

So far as our Empire is concerned, the recognition of India as a partner in Imperial Conferences<sup>1</sup> and the grant of a measure of real self-government are the first steps toward a solution of this problem. It will never be solved by "the good offices" of Downing Street, but by the independent authority of an India which enjoys in the Empire the same dignity and respect as one of the British-populated Dominions. That it must enjoy such a position is inevitable from one fact alone. So long as the Imperial governing authority was the ancient Home Country and the historical British Parliament, India might have been consoled in its subjection because it held in high honour the sovereign power. But so soon as there was an Imperial partnership of Home Country and Dominions, India felt the change in its heart. It has grievances against the Dominions ;<sup>2</sup> it will not pay homage to them. Subjection to Great Britain in the Empire was tolerable ; subjection to the Empire is intolerable. So India must be a partner, must sit on the Board of Directors, must have a voice and a vote in Imperial Councils.

Thus the British Empire expands in its significance. The alliance with Japan since 1902 began the new order of inter-racial agreement on terms of equality, and now the Empire

<sup>1</sup> India was represented in a consultative capacity at the Imperial Conferences of 1907 and 1911, and more fully at the various Imperial War Conferences held since 1914, and also at the Paris Peace Conference.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, much evidence was given by Indian leaders before the Commission on the Indian Public Services appointed in 1913, that Colonial-born British subjects should, owing to the treatment of Indians in the Dominions, be disqualified for service in India.



itself, begun and long existing as a combination of people of one nationality, is to become a federation of diverse races enjoying within the bounds of a common allegiance liberty for self-expression and self-development. It is a new conception for which at present but few minds are prepared, but the impelling force of events drives us into new conditions, and the change will be made before we know its meaning. The Dominions have not said their last word to India, nor India its to the Dominions. The policy of mere exclusion will, however, have to be abandoned, and some agreement reached which, whilst giving the Dominions the legitimate protection they desire, will not be insulting to India.

One conspicuous badge of emancipation I should give to India. I should try it with the responsibility of being tutor to some of the East African peoples under the care of the League of Nations. It would be a great experiment. If it failed, the failure would soon be detected, and would produce no great harm ; if it succeeded, as I believe it would, it would stamp India with an authority which would command for it a position of unquestioned equality amongst the federated nations of the Empire.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE PRESS

THE press in India has always been a thorn in the side of the Government. The memorandum on education written by Sir C. Grant, to which I have referred,<sup>1</sup> shows that a critical press was foreseen to be an inevitable consequence of the opening of schools, and the newspaper has played such a part in British politics that it was bound to appear with political activity in India.

The first paper printed in the vernacular was issued by the missionaries of Serampore in 1818, and was called by the attractive title of the *Mirror of Intelligence*; and when the censorship rules were relaxed next year, against the wish of the directors, but in accord with Lord Hastings's liberal policy, and newspaper articles had no longer to be submitted to a Government official before being published, steps were at once taken to found a press "conducted by natives, printed and circulated in Bengalee and English." The limits of political criticism and religious controversy were still rigidly prescribed, but these were the chief topics dealt with. On December 4th, 1821, the first native paper appeared—the *Sambad Kaumudi*—*The Moon of Intelligence*, edited by Raja Rammohan Roy. It was strongly critical of Christianity, discussed social reform, and appealed to the common folk. Rammohan Roy and his friends then projected a journal addressed to the more educated classes, and, on its appearance in 1822, it discussed politics both Indian and Imperial (an early issue contained an interesting article on Ireland, and another set forth the merits of the Great War of Indepen-

<sup>1</sup> p. 161.

dence) and religion. The Government had no pleasure in an independent critical press, and curiously enough, when Lord Hastings's liberal administration ended, the first editor to be struck at was an Englishman, Mr. Buckingham, who was in charge of *The Calcutta Journal*, and who was deported for writing that Mr. Bryce, head of the Presbyterian Church, had lowered the dignity of a minister of the gospel by accepting the office of Clerk of the Stationery to the India Company. This was followed by the deportation of his successor, Mr. Arnott, who was sent home on a troopship. Since then there has been an incessant struggle between the press and the Government, sometimes very fierce and active and carried on by repression, as in Lord Canning's time after the Mutiny, and more recently in Lord Lytton's time; sometimes more passive and of a waiting and watching character, occasionally brought to a standstill when liberal administrators like Sir Charles Metcalfe, who removed the censorship in 1835, were in responsible positions.<sup>1</sup> Of the position to-day I shall speak presently. During the whole time the vernacular press was virulent in its fault-finding and spared neither the Government nor the missionaries. In the end, the Anglo-Indian press, which was at first an irritating critic of the Government, following Anglo-Indian opinion, ranged itself completely on the side of the administration and in opposition to native Indian opinion, the last of these papers to capitulate being *The Statesman* of Calcutta, a few years ago. A change also crept over the native press, which, until about the middle of the nineteenth century, was largely given over to religious controversy, but which has now become mainly political and in most cases much subdued in tone. The great daily papers are owned and staffed by Englishmen, though *The Bengulee*, *The Punjabee*, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Indian Patriot*, are owned and edited by Indians, and *The Bombay Chronicle*

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote thus: "If India could only be reserved as a part of the British Empire by keeping its inhabitants in a state of ignorance, our domination would be a curse to the country and ought to cease."



is controlled by Indians though edited by an Englishman.<sup>1</sup> The great bulk of the native press is weekly. They are very cheap productions and their circulation is not large, though their influence is considerable.

The position to-day is as follows. The English-owned papers in varying degrees of aggressiveness are pro-English in the sense that they maintain the British ascendancy with all its privileges and are vigilantly anti-Nationalist. They attack the administration with candour when it seems to be yielding to Nationalist claims, and carry on an anti-Indian propaganda which causes much offence and which frequently, in the case of some papers, oversteps the bounds of public policy. In a land subject to a severe press law these papers ought to have been dealt with, for their tone and temper have undoubtedly added to that feeling of resentment which has been played upon by the agents of disorder and political crime. Their criticism, too often takes the form of insults, and Indian papers pursuing the same recklessly mischievous course would undoubtedly have had the law applied to them. On the other hand, the native press may be said to be under the influence of the Indian National Congress, though some of its more obscure issues voice more extreme views and indulge in more violent criticism. Government Departments keep a watchful eye upon the papers, and translations from them are circulated through the Secretariats.

Most of the India papers belong to Hindus, but the Mohammedans have an active press too, especially in the Punjab and the United Provinces. The *rapprochement* between the Moslem League and the Indian National Congress has had considerable effect upon the Mohammedan press, and *The Comrade*, published in Delhi to voice the opinions of the younger Mohammedan party, was written with unusual ability and expressed Nationalist views, but was suppressed for articles on Turkey and Mohammedanism shortly after the war broke out.

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, he has been deported.

The style in which the papers are written varies as the poles. The English papers are ably edited and are equal to the best published here, and the same is true of papers like *The Bengalee*, though all the native productions suffer from that literary wordiness which comes from acquiring English from the works of its wealthy literary wizards like Burke and Macaulay. The second grade of native paper published in English is up to the level of our own average second-rate provincial press, and the moral standards of their discussions and news are as high—though they are much complained of—as those of our own popular press. On their critical side they are extreme in the main, but the British view is more fairly represented in the Indian papers than the Indian view in the English ones—with perhaps one exception. Hardly a day passes but the two are attacking one another openly or by implication. From the second-grade papers downwards, the lack of ability of the editors, or the consciousness that they are appealing to a credulous and unreflecting public, is shown in a reckless and frequently scurrilous criticism based too often upon falseness of statement or an obvious contortion and misrepresentation of truth. They show the vibrating suspicions and dislike which, like lakes of molten lava, lie beneath the surface of Indian life, and which every now and again burst out in eruption through the crust. The circulation of those inferior papers is generally very small, and their letterpress is atrocious and is full of errors. The proprietor is very often his own editor, manager, advertising canvasser, and “reader.” The great majority of them do not pay, or yield but a bare living—which means an infinitesimal profit to their owners and editors.<sup>1</sup>

Press laws are directed against two classes of papers: first of all against those which, belonging to the last class, play

<sup>1</sup> “My own experience confirms this; I could mention many newspapers which are run at a loss, and I have had no personal experience of any which were a source of profit” (Sir Theodore Morison, *Imperial Rule in India*, p. 101).

upon Indian suspicion and susceptibility either for the purpose of making a circulation from it or of doing mischief; and in the next place, against those whose opinions are so inconvenient to the Government that the Government tries to prevent their public expression. The law now in force was passed in 1910 when the Government was faced with the most serious conspiracy since the Mutiny, and when certain papers were undoubtedly inciting to murder and revolt. It puts the whole Indian press at the mercy of the Executive. It provides that persons keeping printing presses shall deposit with the Government sums of from R.500 to R.2,000 as a guarantee which is to be forfeited if they publish anything which in the opinion of magistrates incites to murder, or personal injury, or disaffection of any kind, and publishers of newspapers are put under the same regulations. Forfeiture may also be decreed, but in that case an appeal may be taken to the High Court.<sup>1</sup> Copies of all papers issued must be sent to the Governments. The Government may put this Act into operation without giving any but very general reasons, like "during the last six months" you published "articles and words" in "various issues."<sup>2</sup> The Indian members of the Council, whilst warning the Government, as one of them did, that "Austrian authorities and the policy of the Chancellor of Germany are the least calculated to secure popular support to the measure: Indians are the citizens of the British Empire,"<sup>3</sup> accepted the word of the Government that such a law was necessary and did not vote against it. It was the first important Bill brought before the enlarged Council after

<sup>1</sup> The High Court decided, however, in the case of *The Comrade*, that the Act was so drafted that the court had no power to question or upset the decision of the Government. Two of the High Courts have declared that orders issued under the Act were illegal, but that they had no power under the Act to set them aside.

<sup>2</sup> These words are from the indictment against *The Star of Utkal*, published in Cuttack.

<sup>3</sup> The Hon. Mr. Dadabhoy, *The Indian Press Act 1910, and Proceedings of the Legislative Council of the Governor-General of India relating thereto*, p. 19.



the Morley Reforms, and that of itself explains the complying attitude of the Indian members. Moreover, the Law Department was then under Mr. Sinha (now Lord Sinha), who, though not in charge of the Bill, spoke in favour of it.

The objection to a Press Act and to such repressive legislation generally is not, however, its intention, but its administration and its effect upon Governments. At times of crisis, no Government yet known has refrained from adopting repression. Then equitable administration is abandoned, and, in the interests of the established authority, the innocent have to suffer injustice so that the disturbers of the peace may be caught with them. The net is thrown wide in order that the evil ones may be caught, and accurate individual discrimination is impossible. Let there be no mistaking of the meaning of this, however. It is tyranny and injustice justified by a crisis and by the establishment of conditions which end it. Its continuance as a potential power, sanctioned by law held in abeyance, can never be justified. It is a weapon which must be forged when it is required and not one kept in the armoury of Government ready for use whenever it chooses to resort to it. Here lies the fault of the Indian Government. Its Press Act of 1910 and its Criminal Law (Amendment) Acts of 1919 are contrary to freedom of peoples and responsibility of Governments, and ought to appear on the statute books of no free country.

In the first place a power of repression habitually enjoyed tends to develop a habit of mind in the Government <sup>1</sup> which regards all effectively troublesome criticism as sedition, and it allows a Government which is always partly responsible itself for seditious conspiracy to avoid its own share of the

<sup>1</sup> The Press Act of 1910 was passed for the express purpose of dealing with the seditious movement which started in Bengal owing to the mistaken way in which the Government partitioned that Province, but it has been used, as in the *New India* case six years later, for a purpose which was not in any one's mind when the Act was passed, and which the Government dared not have asked powers to deal with in that way.

blame and impose the whole upon the shoulders of its opponents. A Government which has to justify repression in relation to any given crisis is not only careful to see that its case is overwhelming when it asks for powers, but, what is of much greater importance, it is first of all careful to prevent, by political sagacity, the development of the crisis. As arms make for wars, so the possession of coercive powers makes for tyranny. The power and policy of repression do not make for tranquillity, but for repression and nothing more. The hand which imposes the punishment is also the hand which has helped to make the punishment necessary, and such a hand can never be just, and ought not to have absolute authority at times when justice ought to be the rule of the State—that is, in normal times. This is specially true in States like India where the magistrate is in such close contact with the executive authorities that he is practically their mouthpiece and servant. The very fact that if a Press Act exists at all it cannot be effective if every move which the Government makes under it may be debated, and every reason for putting it into operation argued out in court, is a reason why every such law should be passed not as a part of the body of ordinary legislation but to apply to a particular condition which makes special powers necessary and in regard to which alone the Government receives a free hand. Every foolish Government would like to be able to exercise absolute authority when, in its own opinion, it thinks it ought to do so, but no people with any regard for liberty will give its Government such power.

The practical effect of the Press Act of 1910 in statistics is not very striking. Up to the end of 1913 there were 208 prosecutions under the Act, the busiest year being 1913, when there were 77. That year, in the Punjab, which had been rather troublesome, four deposits were forfeited, two presses were closed, eleven were prevented from starting because they could not make the necessary deposits, eleven that would have been published but for the deposit could not appear, and eleven again were warned for publishing articles that might

stir up strife between the religious communities, and one for sedition. Statistics, however, do not reveal the oppressive effect of such a law, but as it is the record is neither imposing nor satisfying. After the outbreak of war several other papers were suppressed—especially Mohammedan organs under the Defence of India Act. Regarding the suppression of these newspapers in Bengal the following suggestive comment was made by another Mohammedan paper: "The readers of the *Tarjuman* and the *Ekdam* were mostly the Urdu-speaking masses in Calcutta and other places. They used to get correct news—correct, if the Reuter's news received through the censors be so considered—from those papers, and now in their absence wild rumours have the opportunity of playing upon the gullibility of the simple folks. It is a pity that the Government seems to be totally blind to this aspect of the question."

The Press Act is only one of the provisions which the Indian Government uses for repressive purposes. In her little book on *India : A Nation*,<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Besant gives a list of the measures which she would classify under this heading. They are: the *lettres-de-cachet* system embodied in Regulation III of 1818 (Bengal), Regulation II of 1819 (Madras), Regulation XXV 1827 (Bombay), Act XXXIV of 1850, and Act III of 1858. The State Offences Act, XI of 1857, only applying to any district that is or has been in a state of rebellion, and providing for trials of persons charged, should either be repealed or the clause which excepts European-born natural subjects of the Crown should be expunged. The laws as to the Punitive Police—XXIV of 1859 (Madras) and V of 1861—should be repealed. So also the Indian Arms Act, XI of 1878, passed in panic under the "influence of the Afghanistan War. It is not only felt to be a constant humiliation, but it leaves the people at the mercy of armed decoits and a prey to wild beasts. . . . The whole group of panic legislation in 1907-1910 must go," and she also enumerates the Prevention of

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 78-9.



Seditious Meetings Act, VI of 1907, the Press Laws, VII of 1908, and I of 1910, the Explosive Substances Act, VI of 1908, and the Criminal Law Amendment Act, XIV of 1908. In any event the Government should make a thorough revision of all these Acts and Regulations, removing from them everything which has been or can be used for repression in ordinary times, and trust courageously to those powers which all Governments have to protect themselves and their States from anarchy, sedition, and disorder. Governments should be compelled to meet the growth of sedition by political wisdom and not allowed to burden other people with their mistakes, as the Indian Government does when it seeks to maintain order by its Press Laws and Rowlett Acts. The Indian Government has been too often content to create a special class of evildoers—those whose opinions are inconvenient to it—and in the history of Indian repressive legislation this class occupies a prominent and distinguished place. The case of Mr. Buckingham, to which I have already referred, belongs to it; in our own time that of Mr. Tilak largely belongs to it (a number of papers are on the border line between spiteful and malicious evildoing and honest, if strong, criticism); those of Mrs. Besant and the papers, *The Comrade* and *New India*, wholly belong to it. Whilst in the midst of one of her several troubles as editor of *New India*, and after having had to deposit a guarantee of R.2,000 for having written an article advocating Home Rule, Mrs. Besant issued the following statement which exposes the partiality with which all such legislation must be administered, and deprives the “crimes” created by such laws of a serious character and even of a definite meaning: “Under the rule of the bureaucrat it is safer to conspire than to seek for reforms in an open, law-abiding, constitutional way. For if a man is found out in a conspiracy he has at least a trial, and may be acquitted, whereas if he carries on a constitutional agitation his liberty may be taken away and his property confiscated without any more formality than the turning of a magistrate from his normal

business of punishing thieves into a licensed plunderer. . . . The Madras Government, for the first time, attack a newspaper of the first rank, which has never spoken one word of violence, which has loyally stood by the English connection, which has used only constitutional and law-abiding means to bring about reforms which are absolutely necessary if that connection is to be preserved. Loyal as India is, *The Madras Mail* states that she must not be allowed to volunteer lest she should turn her arms against the English; this atrocious article is passed by the Government, which does not care to protect its Indian subjects from the grossest insult. *The Madras Mail*, despite the war, takes the treasonable line of abusing the Coalition Government in a way which would land its editor in gaol if he were in England; but here the Government never dreams of checking it, although it holds up His Majesty's Government to hatred and contempt. It keeps the vials of its wrath for a paper which has dared to demand Home Rule, and has demanded it so effectively that the whole country rings with the cry. *New India* is assailed because it has started a constitutional and law-abiding movement for self-government in India, with the view of keeping India within the Empire. . . . I have nothing to apologise for, nothing to regret, in all that I have written in *New India*." Every one who has followed the prosecutions and repressions under the Press Act, and who has also followed the pernicious but unpunished editorials of papers typified by the Anglo-Indian journal named, must admit that Mrs. Besant's criticisms are fully justified.

Sometimes it is observed in a spirit of disappointment that no Indian newspaper of any value is on the side of the Government in the sense that newspapers here are on the side of political parties. It would be most extraordinary, however, if such a paper were to exist—if it did, its support would be bought. For, however much a Government is appreciated, there can be no Government "party" unless its responsibilities are shared by others than the bureaucracy. The

wisest and best of rulers governing an educated community autocratically can never hope to receive the support of a press outside their own official *Gazette*.<sup>1</sup> The Anglo-Indian press supports the Government only in so far as the Government is the instrument of British rule in India. The link between them is not an agreed policy, but interest and racial prestige. On the other hand, I have never failed to observe in Indian papers due appreciation—often expressed in exaggerated terms of gratitude—of Government actions approved by Indians. It is not true to say that the Indian press is anti-Government. It is more accurately described as independent, and in this respect does not differ from the Anglo-Indian press. Each looks after its own interest and supports or opposes the Government accordingly.

But there is a point of still greater importance. In this country we know that an Opposition is essential to good government. A House of Commons without an Opposition becomes futile. That is a general truth, the force of which has been renewed by recent experience. Governments always create Oppositions, and in India the Opposition is still in the main outside Legislatures and is to be found in National Congresses and the press. That is really the view that the great Indian liberal statesmen have taken. Macaulay's opinion was that the function of the Indian press was to bring to the notice of the Government grievances which would otherwise be hidden from its eyes, and though he was unwilling that his sister should read these papers owing to the personal attacks they made upon himself, he was instrumental in relieving them of the censorship. He grasped the true meaning of political power.

And yet the limits of press freedom consistent with bureaucratic government are narrowly defined. Grievances

<sup>1</sup> This has been tried in India and has failed. Governments have also subsidised newspapers (in 1915-16 the Punjab Government spent R.17,000 in circulating an Anglo-Indian and Mohammedan journal), and that is only to waste public money.



may be ventilated, and the Government may even be attacked in language which ought not to meet the eyes of the sisters of its members. Still no harm is done : indeed, the Government may be all the better for the jolting it gets. It thereby knows the nature of the road it is travelling. But it is quite another thing when public opinion, supported by a powerful press, does not merely ventilate grievances, but criticises policy, or goes the length of demanding that the bureaucracy itself should cease to exist and a freer form of government take its place. A representative Government successfully attacked by the press changes a minister or resigns ; representative government sways in the breezes of public opinion as a tree does in the winds, but its roots remain. A bureaucracy so assailed can change nothing because it cannot be expected to change itself ; it cannot resign, and if it were to do so that would be a revolution in the form of government. Free discussion, the witness of representative government, is the destruction of a bureaucracy. This is a fundamental difference with many attending consequences. The present form of Indian government cannot exist in the midst of a vigorous public opinion. It may be well intentioned, but it cannot be obedient. It cannot allow, if it can prevent it, a determined campaign to be conducted demanding for the people that badge of liberty—self-government. That is sedition so soon as it goes beyond the stage of an interesting debate and reaches that of a serious demand. And this is the case even when political opinion here in the sovereign State is in favour of the change asked for by public opinion in India, but opposed to, and by, the bureaucracy. For instance, there can be little doubt but that the opinions which have been prosecuted in India during the past few years have had the support of the people of this country. The Indian Government is in this dilemma. It may be doomed and its successor may be almost ready : still, it has to govern till the day of its death : therefore, it cannot tolerate the heralds and followers of the new order near to its own throne. The Indian

reformer is in this dilemma. He must agitate for the revolutionised Government, for he knows he will never get it otherwise : he is well aware that this necessary agitation will make the bureaucracy more obdurate and its trust in repressive legislation more certain. Of course in actual practice it is possible to avoid these dilemmas by the exercise of broad-minded common sense and practical sagacity, but a bureaucracy of Civil Servants who have become old in authority must find it difficult, as the Indian Government undoubtedly has, to unbend itself and humour the powers which it cannot subdue. These considerations and not the existence of sedition and other political crime in India, however much of that there may have been, are the true reasons why the Indian codes and statutes are disfigured with so much repressive power. The Indian press, though its function may be to act as part of the constitutional Opposition to the Government, cannot do this work in the full way that papers in this country do, until there is a really free press in India, but Press Acts will never finally disappear there, though both their contents and their administration may vary in stringency, whilst the Government is a bureaucracy. To demand the complete abolition of the Press Acts is equivalent to demanding that the Government itself should be put on a more liberal foundation. The problem of the Indian press is at root that of the inherent conflict between a bureaucracy and public opinion. The last chapter in the history of bureaucracies is repression. They pass away like an old monarch driven from his throne, hurling accusations of sedition against his approaching successor.

## CHAPTER XVII

### RELIGION AND NATIONALISM

It has become a threadbare truism to say of India that its religion is its life. There in sober truth the unseen is lord of the seen. All its political and social origins are in its sacred books. Hinduism as a way of life is the trunk on to which everything else is engrafted and from which everything else draws its sap. It is therefore important to understand the currents now running in Indian religion—always remembering that in the bulk it is immobile.

When, early in the nineteenth century, missionary propaganda and educational influence created a revolution on the surface of Hinduism, the sections affected were small. Only a few were really converted to Christianity; the bulk of those influenced retained their Hinduism and joined in the resistance offered to the new proselytising. Hinduism was reformed in their minds, not overthrown. It was purged of some of its grosser practices, prejudices, and superstitions, its gods became transformed, but it itself became active in self-defence. The Brahmo Samaj was founded because in his heart the Hindu was unwilling to desert Hinduism, but was quite willing to become liberal and respond to the impact of Western faiths. If one were to say that the grand effect of Christianity and of Western education in India has been to throw Hinduism back on its purer origins, one would not be very far wrong, though the statement would not be quite accurate.

The change took several forms. Amongst the less emotional people of the north-west it was one of doctrine and of a kind of puritanical activity; in Bengal it was more idealistic



and led to the study of the poetical and spiritual expressions of the religion, like the *Gita*, and to symbolising the temple worship ; elsewhere it ran into various movements, some of them, like the Order of Ramakrishna which Vivekananda founded, being pure Hinduism ; others, like Theosophy, being a mingling of Hinduism with other philosophies ; others, like the Servants of India, concerning themselves with social reform and service.

Perhaps it was only a drop in the ocean. Hinduism believes and worships as before, its millions living and dying all unconscious of any change. But still, the revolution is to be influenced profoundly by these movements, and they have all contributed to its birth. The West has created the Nationalist movement in India not only by feeding the Indian mind on Western liberal politics, but by driving back that mind upon the entrenchments of its own patriotism.

First amongst Hindu revivals is the Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dyananda Saraswati, the son of a Gujarati Brahmin, born in 1824. A dramatic little story is told of how the light came to Dyananda. When he was fourteen years of age his father took him to the temple to keep the Shivaratri fast, which entailed a night being spent in prayer to Shiva. As the night wore on the worshippers slept, but the boy kept awake. A mouse came out and crawling round the base of the image nibbled at the offerings. This struck the sensitive mind of the lad. If this image was Shiva, why did the god allow such sacrilege ? Awakening his father, he put his doubts to him, and finally received as his answer that the image was not Shiva, but that the devout praying to it found grace from Shiva. The boy would have none of this refinement, returned home, broke his fast, went to bed and slept. Henceforth there were no more idols for him, and the anniversary of this night is kept as a feast by his followers. Then death came into his family, and filled his heart with a yearning to fathom the mystery of being and not-being, of coming and going ; and in 1845 he ran away from home, and for

fifteen years wandered in search of the teacher who would reveal to him what his soul wanted to know. After years of pilgrimage in search of truth, during which his greatest discovery was the debasement of Hinduism, he fell in with the blind Swami Virjananda, to whom he became pupil, and who, when he had taught him all he knew, exacted the guru's fee which it was customary for the *Brahmchari* to pay, in the shape of a pledge that he would "devote his life to the dissemination of truth, to the waging of incessant warfare against the falsehood of the prevailing *Puranic* faith (faith based on the Puranas), and to establish the right method of education, as was in vogue in pre-Buddhist times." He went out into the world again, teaching and disputing, his call being: "Back to the purity of the Vedas." At a great meeting presided over by the Maharajah of Benares he met the pandits of Benares, and they claimed the victory and practically excommunicated him. But Dyananda was not a man to be overawed by the frowns of censuring pandits. His doctrine was that there is one God who is to be known, obeyed, and worshipped, who has never been incarnate and who cannot be approached by the worship of any deity but himself. Caste is a political and not a religious creation. In 1875, after the Swami had come into contact with the leaders of the Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta, the Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay. But it took healthiest root in the Punjab, where Lahore may now be regarded as its capital city, and in the United Provinces.

This was a purely internal Hindu reform, a pruning of all the engrafted shoots upon the Vedas, a return to the authoritative doctrine. The most robust and prolific of these debasements of Hinduism were the claims of the Brahmin. These the Arya disallowed. The Vedas were a closed book to the people. That the Arya opened, imitating in this respect the restoration of our own Bible by the Reformation. Hinduism was a condition of birth. That the Arya denied, and threw wide its doors to any one who cared to enter.

In his defence of the Vedas as a sufficient basis for faith, the Swami came into conflict with Christianity, and thus gave the Arya its first tinge of aggressiveness which made it an expression of Indian nationalism. India was combating the world outside; Indian religion was defending itself and rebutting rival claims. It had been an indefinite and indefinable collection of precepts and beliefs; the Arya attempted to give it precision, at the same time enhancing its claims to great antiquity. The effect was to stop many Hindus from going over to Christianity and to anger missionaries accordingly. Nine-tenths of their attacks upon Hinduism did not apply to the Hinduism of the Arya Samaj. But the new Society carried the war of defence into one of offence, and conducted a propaganda against Christianity. Dyananda was no smooth-tongued controversialist, and his attacks upon our faith have been quoted to our annoyance and the detriment of his Society. He created passion as well as controversy. In a most interesting defence of the Society, written by Munshi Ram, the head of the Gurukul at Hardwar, and Ram Deva, of the Arya College at Lahore, a considerable number of pages are devoted to extracts to show that Christians themselves have not been too polite in the attacks made upon the faith of each other or upon that of other people.<sup>1</sup> In any event, the Arya claims not only to have stopped conversion in certain districts, but to have drawn back converts from the Christian fold.

Herein lies the Arya's strength and the contribution it has made to the Indian spirit. It is aggressive. It makes no apologies. It challenges and fights. That is why, when it began to influence the Nationalist movement, as it was bound to do, the combative independence with which it conducted itself made it so detested by official minds. To belong to the Arya was to carry the badge of a seditious disposition.

It is, however, in its social and educational work that it has

<sup>1</sup> *The Arya Samaj and its Detractors : A Vindication.*



maintained Hinduism most effectually. From its foundation it has opposed child marriages, and has countenanced the remarrying of widows ;<sup>1</sup> it has been sympathetic with the outcaste and has sought to raise him ; and it has been specially interested in schools. In its educational schemes it has always sought to provide for women. Its chief living champion has admitted that "English education and Western ideas have played an important part in bringing about this change, but an equally great, if not even greater part has been played by an appeal to ancient Hindu ideals of womanhood and to the teachings of the ancient Hindu religion in the matter of the relations of the sexes."<sup>2</sup>

Its educational work is concentrated in two great institutions, the Dyananda Anglo-Vedic College in Lahore and the Gurukul in the neighbourhood of Hardwar. The former is associated with the Punjab University, the other is quite independent of Government control, either direct or indirect, but both are intensely national in spirit. Whoever, walking through the D.A.V. College, sees its rooms, the pictures and texts on the walls of its offices, talks with its officials and teachers, who are all Indians, cannot fail to feel how different is the atmosphere there from any of the other colleges in Lahore or elsewhere. At every point he is impressed by the fact that this is an Indian effort, and the reason for it is stated quite definitely in its literature and reports. "To secure the best advantages of education, it is necessary to make it national in tone and character." The present system of education in India "tends to loosen these ties [of nationality] or obstructs the beneficent influence of education from being fairly extended to, and beneficially operating upon, the uneducated," and is therefore "partial, and, from the public point of view, undesirable." "Foreign education has produced a schism in society which is truly deplorable." "This

<sup>1</sup> It has not exactly approved of this, but does not condemn it. In any event the Arya in this as in other rules treats men exactly as it does women.

<sup>2</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, pp. 144-5

result, sad in itself, is the inevitable consequence of the one-sided policy of education imparted through a foreign agency, for whom it was simply impossible to appreciate the indigenous wants, and to apply a suitable method." The task of the founders of the college, therefore, has been "to make provision for the efficient study of the national language and literature, and carefully to initiate the youthful mind into habits and modes of life consistent with the national spirit and character." These are extracts from the opening pages of the first report of the college, and there is much more in the same strain. They make the purpose of the venture perfectly obvious.

Since 1886, the institution has been at work and has been served by teachers and officials who are wholeheartedly with its purpose, and who have accepted salaries very much less—sometimes nothing at all—than are paid in similar schools and colleges.

Even this college, with its determined Indian spirit, does not fully satisfy many of its supporters. Mr. Lajpat Rai, speaking at a college meeting on Founder's Day in 1914, remarked: "But the discipline enforced and the life lived at the Gurukul at Kangri is more in accordance with genuine Hindu ideals than those in the college." This Gurukul to which Mr. Lajpat Rai refers is an offspring from the D.A.V. college. Its founders believed that the connection of the college with the Punjab University hampered it in its work, made it think too much of university examinations (in which it has had much success) and too little of sound national education, and prevented it from pursuing such a curriculum of studies as Indian Educationalists would devise were they free to do so. After being a dissentient minority on the college committee they decided to begin work of their own. In conversation with the head of the Gurukul, Munshi Ram, I had the following explanation of how he came to start the school. He had been a successful lawyer, but the spirit of religion came upon him and he shook the sins of law off his

soul and sought peace in training youth. He had seen how English hampered the education of his own sons and so he desired a new method of instruction ; he was a devoted child of India and he cast out Western methods and returned to the ancient models. So in the jungle by the Ganges near Hardwar he began his Gurukul in 1902. When I was there 300 pupils were at the school.

The Gurukul has been the subject of much suspicion in Government quarters, and it has roused great opposition in missionary and other circles of Anglo-India. But its position is perfectly clear. In so far as the spirit of an independent India, declining to put itself unreservedly in the hands of the British, determined to preserve its own life and traditions, refusing to acquiesce in a denationalising educational system, is a menace to the Government, these Arya institutions are a menace ; but in so far as the ultimate purpose of Great Britain in India is consistent with the growth and nurture of a pure Indian conscience and intellect, these institutions are not only legitimate, but are experiments which the Government should watch with vigilant sympathy and copy if need be with grateful care.<sup>1</sup> There are now several Gurukuls in existence.

Of course, there must be political results from these institutions. Teachers, students, and ex-students must appear from time to time in Nationalist agitation and must contribute (as every denominational and government college in India does) to the ranks of "political undesirables." But the danger into which the Government ran in those trying years at the close of Lord Curzon's rule and the opening of his successor's was that it would classify everything that was pro-

<sup>1</sup> The visit of Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces in 1913, not only dispelled the official cloud under which the school was lying, but did a great deal to prove to the Indians that the Government had not altogether forsaken the many liberal declarations which it had made since the Crown became responsible for India. His kindly recognition of this school was one of many marks of wisdom which characterised Lord Hardinge's rule.



Indian as anti-British. Whilst it was running into that danger it insisted upon regarding the Arya and its works as dangerous political propaganda, and, unfortunately, it was encouraged in its error by biased and unbalanced critics who had an entry to journals of great influence in India and Great Britain. The years from, roughly, 1905 to 1910, will always be studied by statesmanlike Englishmen both in India and at home, as years of warning as to what British policy in India ought not to be ; and the terrible blunders into which officials and their friends fell regarding the nature of the Arya Samaj and the problems which it created will also be studied as illustrations of how easy it is for the best intentioned of people, afraid to face the liberating consequences of their work and to accept the changing circumstances for which they are responsible, to try, during a short time of thoughtless panic, to undo everything they have done. In one of Balzac's nightmare tales—*Don Juan*—he tells how a son anointing the dead body of his father with a magical fluid which was to bring him to life again, became terror-stricken with the return of the dead to life, and how, when only the head and arm were anointed, he dropped the phial and spilt the liquid, and the servants who rushed in saw a young, living head on an old, dead, decrepit body. The work of the British Government in India cannot end in such a horrible tragedy.

This virile, masculine, propagandist sect now numbers half a million adherents. Amongst Christians, amongst Moham-medans, as well as amongst Hindus, it works, drawing the two first to its energetic monotheistic faith, the last to its purified conception of Indian worship, inspiring them all with a patriotism which it never dissociates from its religion. The Arya is India armed against aggression—India solicitous for its own soul. "Nemo me impune lacessit," it might take as its motto, did it not disdain to use a foreign tongue for such a purpose.

In the Punjab we find the more "dour" type of Hindu, serious, stubborn. He does not ascend into flights. His

mind runs in channels of "the law and the gospel." In Bengal it is different. The Bengali is more impulsive and volatile, more poetical and imaginative, in religion more of a ritualist. The revival of Hinduism there has therefore taken a different form. Dealing less with creed, it has gone into literature and ritual, and has been attracted by the more ceremonial and sacrificial aspects of Hinduism. It has taken the *Gita* as its typical gospel, and Sri Krishna as its characteristic deity, and it has lit the fires of its heart from the flaming emotions of this song and the seductive abandon of this hero. The *Gita* expresses heroic action as the Sermon on the Mount expresses heroic passivity. It is very curious that the most beautiful poetry in the sacred books of the East, the temperament of which is always supposed to be contemplation, deals with battle and knightly sacrifice, whilst that in the sacred books of the West, the temperament of which is supposed to be bustling action, upholds the virtue of turning the other cheek.

What wells of the purest spiritual draughts and most invigorating refreshment lie amidst the tangled, weedy growths of Hinduism. Who is there who has read the beautiful contemplations of Sri Sankaracharya on man's soul—the individual Self and the universal Self—can fail to do homage to the religion contained therein, the devout attitude of the seeker who has to remain in the outer courts, and, from the glimpses seen there of the Eternal within, fashion hymns of faith and creeds of satisfaction? If religious philosophy must always at a point move from the mastery of reason into the music of emotion, where is there to be found a more chaste transformation than in these hymns? If religious action must in the end lead to the triumph of sacrifice, defeat, and death, where are its energies enshrined in more fitting emotions than in the finer chapters of the *Gita*? What I may call the neo-missionaries, like Mr. Farquhar,<sup>1</sup> may urge the incompleteness of Hinduism and the superiority of the Chris-

<sup>1</sup> *The Crown of Hinduism.*

tian faith in relation to a liberal civilisation, but the Indian who has a bias in favour of creeds which belong to his own history finds in his own religious books enough spiritual energy and ennobling thought to serve him as a patriot, to guide him as a citizen, and purify him as a man. In any event, just as it was in Japan, the Indian national movement has reacted upon creeds, and the young Nationalist inspired by the conceptions of Indian self-government has also responded to a revival of national religion, sometimes in the crude form that the revival of the Ganpati festival at Poona took, sometimes in the more spiritual forms which were followed by men like Arabinda Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal.

The revolutionary movement in Bengal has been based upon a return to Hinduism. A few agnostics, the products of English education and Western philosophy, led in it, but its strength did not lie in them. Even they, in garb and outward habit, returned to India. When Har Dayal was as far removed from religious Hinduism as I am, he discarded English dress and appeared, even in England, in kurta and dhoti. Most of the extreme left of the movement performed their temple duties with scrupulous devotion and regarded their political action as part of religious duty. The dirt of superstitious ages had gathered upon their idols, but they set about to restore and idealise them. Their worship symbolised life in its bounties and shortcomings, in its promises and failures, and their writing is full of this renaissance. Bipin Chandra Pal's *The Soul of India* may be taken as a guide to this revival. "All these old and traditional gods and goddesses," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "who had lost their hold upon the modern mind, have been reinstalled with a new historic and nationalist interpretation in the mind and soul of the people. Hundreds of thousands of our people have commenced to hail their motherland to-day as Durga, Kalee, Jagaddhatri. These are no longer mere mythological conceptions or legendary persons or even poetic symbols. They are different manifestations

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 187, etc.



of the Mother. This Mother is the Spirit of India. This geographical habitat of ours is only the outer body of the Mother. . . . Behind this physical and geographical body, there is a Being, a Personality—the Personality of the Mother. . . . Our history is the sacred biography of the Mother. . . . We her children know her even to-day as our fathers and their fathers had done before, for countless generations as a Being, a manifestation of Prakriti, as our Mother and the Mother of the Race. And we have always, and do still, worshipped her as such.” It is easy to blow these words about like thistledown before the breath of Western materialist philosophy and “common sense”; but for historical purposes, and for purposes of understanding the mind of Bengal, they stand. This strong back current towards Hinduism floats most of nationalist extremism on its surface. It is the creation in the minds of enthusiasts of an India which is a goddess demanding everything from her sons that has given the Government of India so much trouble recently. It is necessary to sift the husk from the corn in this movement and to understand what is good in it as well as censure what error it may contain. The intense consciousness that they are subordinate and subject cannot be plucked out or beaten down in the Bengalis’ minds, and this creates a reaction to tradition. The return to Hindu culture cannot be stopped. Indeed, so unlovely and barren would India be under an unchallenged and undiluted Western culture that the reversion to native roots and types ought to be welcomed. Our task is to help towards purification, trusting again to the natural procession of consequences to lead the Indian to some satisfactory goal. It is easy for a people to deify a land which they think is oppressed; it is natural for a people like the Indians, who are born hero-worshippers, to embody their spirit in gods and goddesses. Then, persecution does not suppress error and extravagance; it only intensifies them. Meanwhile this religious reawakening in Bengal seizes upon everything which adds honour to India and cherishes it like

a jewel. Places of honour at examinations in Oxford and Cambridge, the achievements of a Dr. Bose or a Dr. C. P. Ray in science, the work of Indians in the administration, the winning of V.C.'s at the front, the sacrifices of youths on the scaffold, are all treasured for laying at the feet of the Mother and enriching her. In the Punjab there is a belief in India ; in Bengal a worship of India.

Such movements at their best can often be most profitably explored by a study of the work of a man, and such a man exists in Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore is known to the West almost solely as a poet. But Tagore's poetry is India. It is the product of his devotion to Indian culture ; it belongs to a revival in Bengali literature which comes from the heart of Bengal far more purely than Chatterji's fiction. It is of the soul of a people, not merely the emotion of a man ; a systematic view of life, not merely a poetic mood ; a culture, not merely a tune. Its counterpart is those burning sentences in which he has time and time again contemned the civilisation of the West ; its companion is the work of his nephew, Gogendranath Tagore, who has revived Indian art with the devotion and soul of a worshipper. And just as in the Punjab the D.A.V. College and the Gurukul proclaim that educational systems spring out of the national spirit, so in Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore has expressed that fact, too, in his school at Bholpur which meets in the ashram and the gardens where his father retired for rest and contemplation. This again is characteristically Bengali and has none of the rigidities of the Punjab spirit. Its classes are open to English teachers, and there are two there now. There is not the same Puritan following of the ancient ways as in the Punjab, but it is Indian and independent, and its worship is the ancient worship of the people. I have spent a few days there as a guest of the school, and its atmosphere and demeanour are as different as can be conceived from those of British-managed institutions.

In Madras there has been little upheaval. Its educated

people have responded to the Nationalist movement as politicians, not as devotees. It is of the south. But there is a purifying process going on. It has responded especially to theosophy, which has its head-quarters at Adyar on the outskirts of the city.

I need not enter into the controversies which the work of the Theosophical Society has raised. Its influence has been great in the awakening of India, and that influence has been described by Mrs. Besant as "the revival of the Eastern faiths, the checking of the destructive effects of missionary zeal, the establishment of an Indian ideal of education, the inspiring of self-respect in Indians, of pride in their past, evoking hope in their future, and the creation of the national spirit now throbbing throughout the land."<sup>1</sup> From the annual meeting of the Society held at Adyar, the Society's head-quarters, in 1884, came the inception of the Indian National Congress, and since the Society has passed under Mrs. Besant's influence it has become far more Hindu in its inspiration than in the days of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. From its activities have come the Hindu College in Benares on the one hand, and the Home Rule League on the other.

In Bombay, the religious side of the revival has not been very marked (though Mr. Tilak bases himself upon religious Hinduism) and has been overshadowed by its political side. I have always found it difficult to get an emotional grasp of spiritual life in Bombay, whereas a political and historical grasp is easily attained. The Nationalist movement on this side of India has been kept largely in the hands of men who were politicians first—like the Parsis Sir Pherosescha Mehta and Dadabhai Naoroji, the Brahmins Tilak and Gokhale, the Mohammedans Tyabji and Jinnah. The new spiritual forces which have revived India in the Punjab and Bengal have hardly disturbed Bombay, though they have made themselves felt. The Tilak religious movement, however, shows none

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Review*, October 1913.



of that new life which recreates the gods whilst it preserves them. It is only a revival of the ceremonies of orthodox Hinduism—Ganpati festivals—prompted, his enemies say, much less by religious fervour than by political designs. Gloomy and resentful historical events are still too clearly impressed upon the minds of the Bombay Hindu leaders to allow the spirit of a purified religion to inspire the Nationalist movement.

But taken in the mass, the religious and heroic tales, creeds, and conceptions of India lend themselves admirably to a Nationalist revival whether conducted on legitimate or illegitimate lines, and the day has gone by—it was never anything but an interlude of reaction—when Western modes of thought and habits of life stood out in the sight of Indians as perfections to copy.<sup>1</sup> India has returned upon herself and is finding guidance from, and pride in, her own past.

I must now turn to the more direct results of Christian propaganda and try to estimate their place in Indian life. A few sentences will suffice for its purely destructive and negative effects which are found amongst the educated and partly educated classes.

When a creed is attacked as Hinduism has been, not only by a new culture, but also by the direct assaults of a rival faith, the attack is evidenced not merely by an awakened allegiance to the spirit of the old creed and the conversions to the new one, but also by the destruction of all credal belief. I was once shown round a Khalee temple, famous for its rites, one of the most frequented outside sacred cities like Benares, by a Hindu dressed in a compromise Eastern-Western garb, who had been at a university and had a superficial smattering of Western knowledge. He discussed what was being shown to me with a semi-cynical detachment, certainly with no devotional attitude. Much to my surprise I found afterwards that he was one of the priests. Too much importance must

<sup>1</sup> When the Brahmo Samaj became cosmopolitan under the influence of its great and only leader, Keshub Chunder Sen, it ceased to appeal to India.

not be put upon this, however, as religion has always sat lightly on many Hindus, especially of the priestly caste, but some reading of Herbert Spencer and Reynolds's novels, together with some knowledge of Christian criticism, had eaten into the foundations of this man's creed, without supplying him with a new one, and in this he was typical of a considerable section of his fellow-countrymen who had been taught the absurdity of seas of treacle without being led to a belief in rivers of crystal. The mentality of these men remains Indian, but they have been emancipated from Indian beliefs. They have creeds, but iconoclasm has shattered faith. Amongst them, Christian activities have been merged in the sum total of Western influence. They belong to a separate group of hybrids, the future of which is doubtful. They are struggling to find a new spiritual soil and certainly have not yet succeeded in their quest. Amongst the masses the case is different.

Christianity in India has not only a long history, but one which begins in myth and fable. St. Thomas himself is said to have been the first missionary, and the quaint little Catholic settlement at the Little Mount outside Madras includes the cavern church where he is said to have worshipped, and is the place of his reputed martyrdom. On the western coast of Southern India are Christian populations whose conversion came by Syriac apostles and whose Christian rites and social habits are twisted and gnarled by age and the pressure of native circumstance and superstition. There are Brahmin Christians who wear the sacred thread and practise Hindu ceremonies; there are Hindu Christians who maintain the habits of caste as rigidly as the most orthodox; to-day the Christian Church, especially in the south, is divided as to whether the outcaste should be baptized from the same font and in the same place in the church as the man of caste, and should sit with him at worship and Communion. In some villages there are different churches for different castes. Christian Hindus often perform ceremonies forbidden by one

or other of their creeds, and they then close the doors of the temples or cover the faces of their gods lest the divinities that would be offended might see. They sin, as they think, securely behind the backs of their gods, Christian and Hindu alike. Christian Hindus have been known, when migrating from one village to another, to take with them the image of the goddess which protects them from cholera, to build temples for Hindu gods and employ priests to minister unto them out of mission funds. "Near Negapatam," says Mr. Sharrock,<sup>1</sup> "the Roman Catholics have a famous image called the Potter's Virgin, who is specially noted for her miraculous powers and is visited by thousands of pilgrims, Hindu and Muslim, as well as Christian. The Roman congregation at A—— determined to get the Virgin also to their village, and so erected a wooden cross to which she was supposed to be transferred, and this was put next to Karumbayi's stone [the cholera goddess] and surrounded by a number of minor deities. Karumbayi, however, signified her disapproval of the symbol of a cross in her neighbourhood, and so it had to be placed elsewhere. They say that the two goddesses are sisters, and St. Thomas and St. Anthony are brothers, while prayers are offered to all four indifferently." Famine and pestilence bring worshippers who bear testimony to their Christian faith just as the Hindus under similar stress bear testimony to their belief in their gods.<sup>2</sup>

The propaganda of the Christian missionaries is not exactly what many people at home imagine it to be. The vision of an earnest and faithful man preaching, preaching, preaching the evangel of Christ with all its superimposed creeds and theologies of Catholicism, Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and so on, is but an imperfect vision of Indian mission propaganda. Sir William Hunter writes in *The Old Missionary*: "I asked why he laid so much stress on teaching, as compared with the

<sup>1</sup> *South Indian Missions*, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> We find a similar thing in Eastern Bengal, where the people are Mohammedans by profession, but Hindus by superstition.



preaching which formed the popular idea of a missionary's work. The reply was : ' I have never forgotten John Lawrence's parting words to me when he passed through Calcutta on sick leave in 1840 : " The only way that will bring the natives to truer and more enlightened ideas is the gradual progress of education." ' ' ' John Lawrence's words have been adopted as the motto of Indian missions. Of course one has to remember that in mission work, as in everything else in India, there must be variety according to circumstances. The problem of a missionary working amongst the educated youth of Calcutta is not the same as that of one working amongst the Ghonds of the Central Provinces. The clash between philosophic Christianity and Hinduism which occupies the thoughts of the missionary faced with the Brahmo or the Arya Samaj implies a propaganda quite different from that which is to appeal to the outcaste in Bombay or the Santal in Seoni. But even amongst these latter the propaganda is becoming more and more indirect. Amongst the ignorant peoples whose religion is really not even Hinduism as taught in the Vedas or anywhere else, but the survival of far more ancient beliefs and ceremonies, the missionary comes less as a preacher than as a friend and protector. He cures the sick, he defends the oppressed. Through the doors of friendship comes the Christian creed. The physician preaches the gospel and the friend of the friendless catechises about its creeds. It is not the dogmatic way of opening the doors to heaven, but it opens them all the same. One has only to drop in to one of those humble mission churches on a Sunday evening to see that in some hearts the good seed has fallen and germinated. The spiritual light in these churches may be dim, but they seem to come up close to you in their smallness and bareness. The worshippers sit on the floor and they cannot forbear to look around and be lively and take a homely interest in a stranger. The hymns and scriptures are in an unknown tongue and yet bring into memory the familiar worship at home. There is devotion, and there is happiness in these tiny places. But

the missionary is far more than a preacher. He is the father and ruler of his flock, who before he came amongst them had not a champion in the world. Some of the older type of Scottish missionaries, the men who came from the bench or the workshop originally, with their hearts full of "love and pity for the heathen," filled this rôle of ruler as well as preacher with a gifted power. Stern, rugged men, with a rich endowment of common sense and an overbearing and commanding personality, they turned the mission into a State. That type is disappearing, though in the outlying districts it has still much work to do. But in the towns, the football university Christian is taking the place of the workman missionary. Hinduism is not now to be stormed by a rival system ; it is to be dwarfed and dwindled by a new atmosphere or it is to be transformed out of itself into Christianity by its own internal forces of growth, quickened by the influences which Christianity has brought to bear upon them.<sup>1</sup> Thus the mission lays more and more weight on education, not only that Christians may be able to read, but because the subtle and creative atmosphere which is most congenial to Christian influence is suffused by education ; and it is not so much the Christian creed that is propagated (though of course this is done all the time) as the social implications of Christianity which Hinduism cannot satisfy. The Church thus ceases to be Christ's body and becomes Christ's spirit. So it can be said : "Government officials, from the Viceroy to the lowest subordinate, stand side by side with the missionary in this sacred and holy ministry."<sup>2</sup> I know how fine are the men who are at this work, but I wonder if they can succeed. Particularly do I wonder if they do not lose sight of India, because their little group of converts and would-be converts stands so close round about them. All the while, however, they are creating India because they are not making converts so much

<sup>1</sup> J. N. Farquhar, *The Crown of Hinduism*.

<sup>2</sup> Lucas, *Our Task in India : Shall we Proselytise Hindus or Evangelise India ?*

as emancipating men's minds, breaking down old social divisions, and purifying old faiths. At one Christian college I came across a bright attractive-looking Mohammedan lad who told me he was studying under Christian influences in order to be "a good Mohammedan." I am not sure that they are aware of the full significance of this new missionary method, though it is felt by men like Mr. Andrews who used to be at St. Stephen's College, Delhi. They are grafting their new cultures on Indian stocks and in their own minds a curious Indianising process is at work. They are converting and being converted at the same time.

The statistical results of centuries of proselytising are not very massive, but no one would ever think of measuring the effect of missions in this way alone.

There are 4,000,000 Christians in the Indian population of about a hundred times as many, and they are mostly drawn from the outcastes and the lower social classes.<sup>1</sup> Progress is slow, and of the 4,000,000 a large number can hardly pass muster. They are poor dear children of dim and uncertain light, but they have been baptized. By no means have they all been converted individually. Economic motives have often determined their profession of faith, and the great colleges founded and maintained by missions have yielded but scanty harvests in converts. Few missionaries are happy about the result, and there is a perceptible movement in favour of closing miscellaneous colleges, making these institutions purely Christian, and specialising missionary activities upon residential halls where students may congregate. The resi-

<sup>1</sup> "Of the whole Christian community in India 90 per cent. have come from the depressed classes, or the outcaste community. Of the remaining tenth of the community, about four-fifths are from the respectable Sudra classes. Of the remaining one-fiftieth, most are from the Muslim faith; of these again the majority were originally members of the Hindu community, but they passed through Mohammedanism into Christianity. Probably not more than one in a thousand (of the whole Christian community in India) comes from the Brahmin Caste" (*Year Book of Missions in India*, 1912, pp. 203, etc.).



dential college and college hall are, for the time being, the new toy of the Indian educationalist. It is a good toy, but as I have walked through it I felt that its story would ultimately be read in the history of the disappointments of well-meaning men who have striven "to bring from afar good to India." Its success will depend upon how it is worked. I could name some of these institutions which I have visited and carefully scrutinised, and they will fail and fail badly; I have seen others which may succeed in supplying an atmosphere of reverence, of culture, of education to the Indian student.

But I write of the Christian mission here as at once the creator and the settler of great political problems. So soon as education penetrates to the very bottom strata of Indian society and political ideas follow it, the outcaste will become a mighty Indian problem. A few educated and intelligent outcastes with some determination and strength of will could raise that problem in a pressing form. For the challenge which a handful of such men could throw at Indian society would find that society unable to resist and would alter at any rate its political expression. One man breaks down a barrier and in his footsteps all men may tread. Here is the real revolutionary effect of missions.

This mission field is of immense width, and no friend of missions need be disturbed because his successes are "only amongst the outcastes." Paradoxical though it may seem, it is really one of the plainest and simplest of truths, that whoever emancipates the outcaste emancipates India. In India there are 50,000,000 outcastes (divided amongst themselves by caste divisions) scattered throughout the country, whose very shadow is a pollution, who live outside villages or in town districts under conditions unspeakably bad. The outcaste's lot is worse than that of the beasts who do not understand; his religion is of the most primitive kind, his superstitions are appalling. Fear lurks to greet him in every corner, and terror comes with every unusual occurrence. Pestilence dwells in his midst. Often sold with the land on

which he works, often pawned for debts, he is not treated as a human being at all. He is known by a name which is applied to everything outside the pale of kindness and consideration. He eats filth, his drinking habits are disgusting. The most respectable labour to which he can put his hand is work on the fields, and when that is not to be had, he becomes road-mender, scavenger, or anything that no one else will do on account of its nature or of prejudice against it. In the eyes of the law the outcaste is equal to a Brahmin, but the law is only a sentiment. He may acquire property, but it is constantly encroached upon ; he must be servile in all his attitudes ; sometimes he may not even approach a public place like a post-office. He is habitually in debt and pays without murmur most extortionate interest. The caste man has no scruples against fleecing him. Twenty-five per cent. per annum, not always honestly levied, is a common rate of interest to impose upon him. Yet he manages to be happy. You meet him smiling. He is said to have a good sense of humour and he is fascinated by rhythmic beatings of tom-toms. He accepts his lot. I have written of him as if he were all alike, but that is, in reality, not the case. He varies, but these are his typical characteristics.

Yet, in some districts, he is the descendant of ruling dynasties and the remnant of an imperial and conquering race. Sindh was once ruled by Sudras.<sup>1</sup> The masterpiece of Tamil literature was written by a pariah ; in the south of India, Sivaites worship the deified Nanda, who was a pariah. Even to-day, in spite of the accumulated disadvantages of many generations of neglect and outlawry, many able men are included amongst the outcastes, and their children do well at school. The aboriginal converts in the Chota Nagpur district have made such progress in education that a college has been established for their boys. Of the Indian Christians

<sup>1</sup> " In one country we hear of high-caste Hindu princes receiving the *tilak*, or mark of investiture, from Bhil or Mina tribesmen " (Baden-Powell, *The Indian Village Community*, pp. 89-90).

who do so well at Madras University many are of outcaste descent, and such men are to be found in colleges teaching Brahmin youths. But if they are appointed to a public office the responsible officer is generally threatened with all sorts of disapproval. Many who claim the benefits of the Queen's Proclamation that no favour will be shown in appointing any of her Indian subjects to public office assume that it does not apply to the pariah—in any event they have no intention of applying it to him.

The effect of Christian propaganda is to bring within the pale of the political community this class, enormous in numbers, not altogether mean in capacity, but weakened in will and self-confidence by long generations of servility. As they are taught to lift up their heads so will they become of some political importance, but that is a slow process. Still, the beginning is made, and with it the most serious assault yet delivered against caste, and the most doughty blow yet struck for the liberation of Indian genius and intelligence.

Caste is by far and away the most predominating influence on Indian life. Begun to protect the higher civilisation of the invading Aryan from Dravidian and other aboriginal contamination, it has developed both in theory and in practice into a rigid religious and social organisation, the breach of which is attended with the direst consequences. Amongst the more educated sections its rigidity is slackening, but its spirit remains ; amongst the masses its power has hardly been weakened. In fact, to-day, amongst the masses of the people, so ingrained is the spirit of caste that new castes are being formed. Communities, trades, and other groups seek social distinction and privilege by declaring that they belong to a caste, and they can usually get their claims sanctioned by some accommodating Brahmin who supplies them with a pedigree of race for a fee in the same way that the College of Heralds supplies an upstart at home with a coat of arms.<sup>1</sup> It perhaps matters not. Caste can be broken either by being

<sup>1</sup> There is even a caste of train thieves.



destroyed or by being made universal, as the glory of titles may be dimmed either by republicanism or sycophancy, by their abolition or their extension, after the manner of recent Honours Lists.

Some of the Hindu communities, like the Arya Samaj, dispute the authority of caste, but even amongst Christians it retains its power. "Striking as has been the success of Christian missions, it must be admitted that this great success has been nullified and vitiated to a great extent by the admission of caste into Christianity."<sup>1</sup> The caste mind is not only fenced round with social advantage, but with religious faith, and heroic indeed is the man who defies it. All the curses of the cruel hundred and ninth Psalm fall upon his head. He is cut off from his kin and his inheritance, his children are left unwedded. In the bazaar no one will trade with him; he must not cross the threshold of his temples. When he dies no one will carry his body to the burning-place. He is out-cast upon earth and debarred from heaven. Turned away from his own door in life, none of the rites which light his way through the darkness of death may be done for him.

The spread of education and the prevalence of foreign travel have modified caste rigidities. In the north they are less observed than in the south. The rules of exclusive eating are being widened, tea is not considered as a meal, and in Madras I was once invited to partake of a real meal with a company of Brahmins who remained in caste. The ceremony of purification is not only being applied to circumstances in which but a few years ago it would hardly have been held applicable, but the ceremony itself is being neglected in cases where it strictly ought to be resorted to. In whole classes—and those of the higher castes—caste is becoming not much more than the social exclusiveness which is prevalent in our own society, and its evils are becoming, in numerous social reform societies, the subject of condemnation.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Sharrock, *Hinduism Ancient and Modern*, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that the Lutheran and other German missionaries

This division of Indian society has been a source of great trouble to Indian missions. Caste keeps the Brahmin a Hindu when he has ceased to believe in the doctrines of Hinduism, and for the people generally it means that Christianity loses its influence when it has destroyed the old faiths. It destroys but cannot replace. The new inspiration is parched out of existence by the social power of the organisation of the old faith.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, and for the same reason, Christian India, being outside the pale of Hindu India, finds its influence on the intimate life of the people very limited. The Christian is a foreigner to his own family, and that is true whether he has been a Brahmin or an outcaste. This is one of the explanations of mass conversion. It is much easier for a whole village than for an individual to be baptized, and whilst the religious value of the change may be doubtful (in accordance with the view one holds of what religious conversion really is) its political possibilities are very great.

This mass conversion is one of the most interesting movements in India from a political point of view, because it arises very largely from economic causes and from revolts against oppression which in time are bound to have political consequences of no mean importance.<sup>2</sup> Then the whole of a community goes over to Christianity, sometimes taking into Christianity its gods, its ceremonies, its superstitions, and its prejudices. The famine which lay upon the land from 1876 to 1879 brought thousands of outcastes to baptism. As a result of the secular work done by the missionaries, two Anglican

and the Roman Catholics coming from societies where social caste is strongly marked have accepted and explained caste in India as though it were practically the same social practice which they knew at home. The analogy is not complete. A more complete analogy is the refusal of white men to have social intercourse and sanction alliances with coloured people in communities like the American Southern States.

<sup>1</sup> "The history of South Indian missions is very largely a history of caste troubles and caste relapses" (Rev. J. A. Sharrock, *World Missionary Conference*, 1910, vol. ii. p. 370).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Census Report*, 1911, vol. i. part i. p. 137.

Societies at Tinnevely baptized, in 1880, 19,000 people. This began the great mass movement of pariahs in the south towards Christianity. The north followed later. Here the American Missions are powerful, and it is said they take less precautions than others as regards baptism; but, be that as it may, Indian Christians have increased in the Punjab in ten years (1901-11) by 431·6 per cent., and the gains are shared by all the missionary societies at work in the district. The moving cause of this must be put down to the fact that the missionaries got the Government to allot large areas of newly irrigated land for Christian settlement. Thus the Chuhras, who have hitherto been agricultural labourers and skin dealers, if they became Christians could for the first time in their lives become land-holders.<sup>1</sup> Gross cases of systematic persecution of pariahs come under the notice of missionaries, and even if they are not remedied at once, the sympathetic advice given awakens corresponding sympathy in the mind of the little community. A new light begins to dawn upon it and a new interest to awaken in it. When this is amplified by the feeling that at last the pariah has protection within the law and in his possessions, he becomes a new man in a new world. His whole community changes its social allegiance by accepting baptism. But the change does not end there. The improvement in his social status lets light into his mind. He is taught self-respect; he becomes more cleanly in his habits. He does give some proof of having been "born again." "It is just as true in the Punjab as in South India that, while the origin of the movement is mainly social, there is a strong spiritual force at work within it."<sup>2</sup> As was the case of the Shanars of Tinnevely, whose oppression by Brahmin tyranny led to mass conversion, the revolt of dignity precedes the religious change and is the reason for it, and, the new allegiance having been made, it carries certain spiritual consequences with it.

<sup>1</sup> *International Review of Missions*, October 1914, p. 653.

<sup>2</sup> Bishop of Madras, *International Review of Missions*, July 1913.



We must not assume, therefore, that mass conversion is something that is not conversion. The missionaries can defend it as missionaries and not merely as reformers. I deal with it here, however, mainly as one of the great movements in the emancipation of the Indian spirit. Men are influenced naturally in masses. Every evangelist campaign in Great Britain is an example of mass conversion and shows the characteristics of a mass psychology. It starts from personal influence. Schwarz acquired his hold over the Shanars of Tanjore because of his personality, and Ringeltaube laid the foundations of Christian missions in Travancore in the same way. The Christian movement amongst the Chuhras in the Punjab originated in the conversion of a hide-buyer of great propagandist zeal. But the personal influence is of an illuminating kind, and when it champions as well as persuades, and when it deals with people accustomed to common action in a community, a mass response is the result. Truly the method is like casting a net into the sea and hauling in every fish that gets entangled. This is good for the Church if the Church has the power and capacity to discipline the baptized; in any event it is good for India because it has put men on their feet. Nor must the sneer that the motives are economic be taken at too high a valuation. It may be so, but economic desires are very often the vehicles by which mental awakenings show themselves and find a fuller expression. The spirit needs a body; the free man needs possessions, and if these masses of outcastes are moved by a revolting spirit to seek justice and human right and testify to the change which has taken place within them in the only way open to them—a profession of what their champion considers to be all-important and an association with him in the worship of his God—who with any appreciation of the workings of the human mind will have the hardihood to say that what takes place can be described in terms of personal gain? It has a significance far deeper than that.

The areas where these mass conversions are prevalent lie

mainly in the extreme south of India, in Madras from the Mysore border to the middle of Hyderabad, amongst the Santals in Bengal, and north-westwards through the United Provinces and the Punjab from Bareilly and Meerut, in the Khasi Hills in Assam, in the region of Jubbulpore in the Central Provinces.

In addition to the Christian missions, other agencies are at work in India for the reclamation of the outcaste. Within recent years Hindus themselves have been active, and chief amongst them have been the Arya and the Brahmo Samaj. For in the Ayra Samaj in particular and amongst Hindus in general is a keen determination not to allow the untouchables to be considered as anything but Hindus. The Hindu requires these people to keep up the numbers upon which he bases his political claims. If they slip from his fold he is weakened. So from this point of view, missionary activity is a grand attack upon his power and he must sacrifice some tradition to enable him to meet it. When the Gait circular threatened the Hindus that in the census of 1911 the outcastes might not be classified as Hindus, great was the consternation of Hindu society. "The Gait circular had a quite unexpected effect and galvanised the dying body of orthodox Hinduism into sympathy with its untouchable population, because that was so necessary to avert its own downfall."<sup>1</sup>

True to its own tenets, the Arya admits outcastes to membership, allows them to perform rites like Homa, invests them with the sacred thread. These admissions sometimes are also of the nature of mass conversion when, as in the territories of the Maharajah of Jammu and in Kashmere, 10,000, and in the district of Sialkote 36,000, have been admitted *en bloc* into the Samaj. The Rajput Suddhi Sabha, formed by the Arya for the purpose of reconverting to Hinduism Mohammedan Rajputs, is said to have won for the Arya the conversion of as many as 370 in one day. Between 1907 and 1910 it reconverted 1,052. It is estimated that nearly two-

<sup>1</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, pp. 227-8.

thirds of the Arya members in the Punjab were of the depressed classes. There has been opposition from the orthodox, but the Arya Samaj is too strong to be cowed or to be turned from its deliberate purpose. It backs up its work by education and other kinds of reforming social effort. The Brahmo Samaj with less enthusiasm and on a smaller scale is doing similar work. It has, however, helped by both precept and example to interest orthodox Hindus in a Mission to the Depressed Classes. On such thorny questions as whether the converts of this Mission are to be absorbed into caste Hinduism or not—questions which the Arya Samaj has definitely answered in the affirmative—the Brahmo is divided. In this as in other things the Brahmo is well intentioned but feeble. The Servants of India and various other Social Reform Societies are working at the same problem, whilst no single leader of the Indian people has failed to acknowledge the responsibility of the higher castes to uplift the lower.

On the other hand, Mohammedan missionaries have met with some success particularly in the Punjab where they have made specially marked headway amongst the Chuhra who have yielded so many converts to Christianity. The outcaste turning Mohammedan becomes fully enfranchised at once in his new community—in some respects more than if he became a Christian. Thus, the long stagnant waters of Indian life are being stirred to the very bottom.

The view is very commonly held, both by Indians and English, that the Christian missions in India thwart the Nationalist movement not only by openly opposing it, as some missionaries do, but still more effectively by implanting in the minds of the people thoughts which lead them away from Indian leadership and ideas. The results of a propaganda, however, are not always what they are intended to be; the harvest to be reaped is not in the keeping of the sower of the seed. It is true that the older missionaries appear on the whole to have been anti-Nationalist and to have led their people on roads other than Indian, and that opposition to



Nationalism has come from some of their converts. This, however, is changing. The younger school of missionaries are not anti-Nationalist ;<sup>1</sup> Indian Christians have shown some degree of national independence in church government ; the vitality of Indian life is bound to draw to itself the minds and movements awakened by missionary propaganda. The Christian mission may tend to bind the native Christian to the sovereignty of the conqueror by giving him the faith of the power in possession, but that is not antagonistic to Nationalism. "Jesus Christ," a leading Nationalist is reported to have said, "was hopelessly handicapped by his connection with the West."<sup>2</sup> But Jesus Christ is universal and is not Himself Western, and a Christian Church in India will, as it grows in strength, become Indian in spirit. The essential point to keep in view is that the missions are educating the people. In India, the highest percentage of literate men is amongst the Christians with the exception of the Brahmins, and also of literate women with the exception of the Parsis. This is bound to break down the barriers which separated the outcaste from humanity. As a result of this education, the outcaste is thinking for himself and is acting for himself. He becomes a personage in his own eyes and not a servile encumbrance on the face of the earth. He is forming his own communities, his own co-operative societies, his own rudimentary forms of self-government, and, though it will take him as a class some time to rise out of the deep muddy ruts into which he has fallen, his past shows that he has genius and ability. The instinct for self-control which an educated people have is even shown in the community of Indian Christians by an opposition to missionary tutelage. Raja Sir Harman Singh complained in a Presidential address delivered to an Indian Christian Conference that missionaries showed too much racial prejudice and too great a desire "to keep all power and authority in the missionaries' own hands," and he claimed

<sup>1</sup> Andrews, *Renaissance in India*, pp. 164-8.

<sup>2</sup> *World Missionary Conference Report*, 1910, ii. p. 346.

that Indian advice should be sought and taken in the management of the Church. He went on to say that "the Indian Christian community must ever keep before itself the national idea" and co-operate with non-Christian Hindus. So we have the National Missionary Society started and a native Indian Church organising itself. For some years there was an agitation amongst Anglicans for an Indian Bishop, and this was successful when the Rev. V. S. Azarian—himself of outcaste origin—was consecrated for the diocese of Madras a few years ago. In other walks of life, the educated outcaste is taking a part in the Nationalist agitations appropriate to his interests and experiences, and as was the case with the Mohammedans so will it be with the Christians: sharing in the life of India, they will give back to it their energy, begotten of their ideals and their discontents, their claims and their resentments. It is a strange phenomenon, this struggle for the control of the minds and souls of the 50,000,000 outcastes. It means that Indian society at the very bottom as well as at the top is being educated and is being taught self-reliance, and that, both above and below, political self-government and personal ambition are fermenting. It may be long ere this ferment produces its inevitable changes, but that it will do so is not open to doubt. One thing will hasten matters. Representative government must sooner or later, and in some degree, be given to India, and the outcaste will not be left out. His recognition is necessary for the Hindus to enable them to keep up their proportion of the Indian population, and his missionary champions are not likely to let him be excluded in the cold. Moreover, a sufficient section of the community is now too wide awake to allow an Indian Government to be established in which they have no share or lot.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### CONCLUSION

WHEN the war burst upon Europe, India was in a state of great political unsettlement. The troubles with the South African and Canadian Governments had stirred up ugly feelings in India. "Anarchism" had become threatening. Centres of disaffection and revolutionary propaganda had been established in Europe and America, and the bomb had appeared. Political dacoities were prevalent in some districts, particularly in Bengal; youth was throwing off restraint, and students—now at this college, now at the next—showed an ominous ferment of conduct. But the forces making for creative change were to be found elsewhere. These incidents and signs only hampered those forces, filled the authorities with apprehension, but also with obstinacy, and confused the evolutionary tendencies native to Indian politics. A new generation had been born. The National Congress leaders found that a tide of opinion had risen outside which had submerged their old landmarks. At first, as was human, they looked on with regret and unwillingly accepted the facts. But the circumstances were too strong for them. The Surat split was healed; the demand for "Home Rule" was taken up; the old programme for detailed reforms was merged in a general claim for self-government. Indian politics were about to take a quick march forward.

Upon this the war came and suddenly the whole world seemed to be transformed. Comradeship in danger promised to wipe out past divisions, and facing a common foe to dispel



lack of confidence in each other. Those critics of the Indian Nationalist movement who saw in its demands nothing but sedition and in themselves nothing but perfection, had long been misreading the signs of the times and misleading the British public at home and the British Administration in India. With the outbreak of the war, the mischievous errors of these critics were revealed.<sup>1</sup> India was proud to send soldiers to fight as companions with white troops on European soil<sup>2</sup>; rich and poor gave, each after his kind, to India's offering; at home we began to talk of turning over a new leaf and of governing India differently. By and by from the field came stories of Indian valour; coveted V.C. badges were pinned on Indian breasts; India felt that her blood was washing out her colour. She even talked of saving the Empire from ruin. The exploits of Japan had been giving the East courage; the employment of Indian troops in the war gave India pride. Then there was a lull and a back-set. India's enthusiasm was not encouraged; her recruits were not accepted; her ambulance corps were disbanded; the adminis-

<sup>1</sup> How grievously these people misread the nature of the Nationalist movement is known to everybody who has spent any time in mastering its purposes. The surprise felt when India demanded a share in the war only showed how little our people understood India. This sentence from a speech delivered in Bombay in March 1894, by Mr. A. O. Hume, the founder of the National Congress, is remarkable only for the accuracy of its description of what happened, not for the exceptional nature of what is said in it. "A great war will be India's opportunity—opportunity of proving that if in periods of peace she clamours—at times somewhat angrily—for equal civil rights, in the hour of war she is ever ready and anxious to accept equal military risks." The report records that this was followed by "prolonged applause."

<sup>2</sup> It is of some importance to note the precise direction in which the thoughts of Indians turned in those days, and that is shown in the speeches made in the Legislative Council on September 8th, 1914. Raja Sir Muhammad Ali Muhammad, Khan of Mahmudabad, said: "The decision [to employ Indian troops] has made the British Government more national than any measure of reform of recent years"; and Rai Sitanath Ray Bahadur said: "It has not only satisfied the just pride of the several martial races that inhabit India, it has not only enhanced their sense of self-respect, but has also established, and proved before the world at large, their common citizenship with the inhabitants of other parts of this great Empire."

tration became timorous at the spectre of an aggressive nationalism. The lips spoke good things; the eyes glanced suspiciously at the audience. There was a reaction towards the old views that the East was destined to be governed and to yield huge profits to Western capital—was a place where the childhood of the world still lingered as if protected by some magic—was unable to look after itself in the bustle and turmoil of this earth.

Suddenly in the midst of this came the Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into the conduct of the Mesopotamia campaign. It revealed neglect, miscalculation, lack of foresight and forethought; but above all, it revealed a broken machinery, an inelastic system of government, an effete political method. The problem of Indian administration was brought before the nation with a dramatic force and an insistence which could not be denied. A change of a fundamental character in Indian administration must take place. Mr. Chamberlain resigned an office in which his heart was never set, I believe, and Mr. Montagu succeeded and declared for a thorough reform in the Indian Government. He then proceeded to India to consult with the Viceroy and representative parties, and in due time the Report christened after the Secretary of State and the Viceroy appeared. The bulk of this book was written before the Report was published—indeed, long before the Mesopotamia blunders were revealed—but the conclusions come to in it have required no modification by what has happened or what has been published since. Without the Report my conclusions would have appeared to be extreme and might have remained for years a desirable, perhaps, but certainly a distant goal. And yet, the Report dealt with a system of government spent before the war. The war revealed, but did not make, the cracks in it. Before Indian troops marched within sound of battle in Europe, the bureaucracy was shattered more completely than any anarchist bomb could do the work, but Indian Victoria Crosses and Mesopotamia Reports shortened its years of apparent utility.

In the inevitable reconstruction we must be guided by a fundamental fact. The system of Indian government which has come to an end was a historical growth, arising out of conquest and subjection. The Indian was inferior and had to be governed ; in so far as he took part in his government it was as a subordinate with very limited powers. Nominally, the ideal of self-government as a goal was always before us, but in the transition from a subordinate to a self-governing state there must be a break, because the conceptions of the one, even when liberally held, are different in kind to those of the other. An administration like that of India may be reformed ; its civil service thrown open to its sons ; a generous infusion of native members upon all the governing authorities made. But there still remains the citadel of the foreign Government, limited in its proud authority and narrowed in its empire maybe, yet untaken and dominating all else. When that citadel opens its gates a revolution, however peaceful and constitutional, has taken place, and it is just that last event in the evolution of liberty which it is so hard to bring about. The fundamental fact to which I have referred is that no mere reform of the existing system will be of avail because the conception of India's place in the Empire which that system embodied has changed and now no longer exists.

We must now begin with self-government set clearly before us as our definitely pursued goal, and in reconstructing Councils and Civil Services we must grant powers which give Indians a responsible share in their own government. When that break is made, the future can be left to look after itself, but until it is made we shall be creating administrative systems which will not evolve, and applying confusions which will keep us in the dark.

The most important of the changes required are indicated in the preceding chapters, and both their necessity and the difficulties attending them are discussed. Regarding them, a word of warning is necessary. The change cannot be made without great risks, some unsettlement, and the exercise of



the most commanding statesmanship. It is a task of enormous magnitude and its ultimate success will depend as much upon the spirit in which it is done as upon the first fashioning of details. It must be approached in no niggling frame of mind. Whoever does it will be faced by an array of paralysing facts, failures, disappointments. In countless secret documents there are records of how unsatisfactory Indian commissioners and magistrates have been ; in countless hearts there are secret fears of consequences kept alive by many tales of troubles ; in countless psychologies there are racial antagonisms. These ought not to be pooh-poohed, nor ought they to befog the minds of those who wish to do justice to India.

Part of them are the products of the present system, and if they are to set bounds to our future policy that system will remain stifling and contorting the genius of India ; if, however, we regard them as evil effects and courageously set about removing their causes, they will disappear, and happier experiences and more generous appreciations will take their place. Part of them may be put down to "human nature," and will continue to trouble us. During the readjustment, Indian administration may have to suffer in certain respects, for you cannot teach a people a subordinate mentality and expect to find that the fruits of that mentality are those of a responsible self-governing race. We have done all we can *for* India ; we must now carry on our work *with* India.

I therefore lay the greatest stress upon the personality of the Viceroy and the Governors sent out from home. Those, in the reconstruction years, ought to be men of the highest political intelligence, who will associate with themselves the best Indian capacity available, who, believing in liberty, will not be frightened should its first appearance be threatening, and who understand that liberty, and not repression, is the safeguard of both rulers and States. When the first storm bursts, he who runs away will desert the nation, he who stands firm will save it.

The first points to attack are the Legislative Councils and the Viceroy's Council. The former must have more authority—especially in finance—the latter must be made more representative. A Viceroy more distinctly the eyes, the ears, and the mouth of India, Councils more authoritative and representative—that is the foundation of everything. But I repeat here, to emphasise it, what I have already written: we must remember that the democratic forms of the West are not the only forms in which Democracy can take shape, and in the Indian reconstruction it will not be enough, after considering, say, Western constituencies as a basis of representation and discovering that such cannot exist in India, to conclude, therefore, that representative government is impossible.<sup>1</sup> India is not a nation of equal citizens so much as an organisation of co-operating social functions. So that I doubt, even if in India every adult was educated, and the vast majority took an intelligent interest in what business is transacted at Delhi or Simla, whether a General Election after the British manner is the only way to give a mandate to the Imperial or Provincial Councils, and elicit what Indian public opinion is. The forms of Democracy which we use and the methods we adopt to keep them going presuppose not only general education and political interests, but two other things—a population compassable in numbers and a land compassable in size. And even as I write our old assumptions regarding Democracy and its expression by elections and through Parliaments are being assailed by critical attacks more formidable and better armed by reason and experience than we have been accustomed to think were possible.

<sup>1</sup> Some grave defects have already shown themselves in the way elections are conducted in India and in the results of the unimaginative transportation of our democratic machinery to India. On these, *The Hindu Review* for February 1913 makes this sensible comment. "The failure of these new institutions [District and Local Boards] is due to the fact that they did not grow naturally from within the people themselves, but were imposed upon them from without. This failure does not prove our incapacity for self-government, but only the unsuitability of these to our genius and traditions."

India may not accommodate itself to our conditions. But it has its governing organs from the village panchayet to the Viceroy's Council, graded up through District and Municipal Boards and Provincial Legislatures. It has its men of political experience and ability, and though they may be confined rather much to landowning and the law, every one who knows them must admit that their outlook is a civic one and that their political ambitions are based upon thoughts of their municipality, their Province, and their country. Growing up around them is a class of successful manufacturers and men engaged in commerce and industry, and these, when the interest and honour of public life are presented to them, will appear on the representative bodies. The same class of man as was available for Parliament in England in 1832 is available now in India, and, if it be that only the blinded optimist sees no dangers and difficulties ahead, it is equally true that only the paralysed pessimist can refuse to admit that all the risks must be taken and the Indian trusted with a distinct measure of self-government.

Moreover, the first buds of a new democratic epoch also appear in two characteristic forms. The first is the Social Reform movement, which takes many shapes, from the Servants of India to the societies for raising the depressed classes. The second is the growth of the economic conflict between Capital and Labour. Whoever has visited the industrial districts of Bombay or Calcutta with their slums and filthy tenements—slums and tenements which make the very worst I have seen in Europe desirable dwelling-places—or whoever has studied factory conditions in the jute mills of Bengal or the cotton mills in Bombay, must have seen that, if this conflict is not soon organised and produces comprehensive programmes of legislation, municipal administration, and trade-union action, India is doomed to pauperism, disease, and degradation. But the trade union has appeared and the strike is known—the strike which has evoked the loyal support of great masses of workpeople both men and women,



which has been conducted with persistence and determination and been rewarded with success.

Equally hopeful and essential to a self-governing India is a social reform movement, and that now exists with vigour. The best of the reform societies is the Servants of India, founded in 1905 by the late Mr. Gokhale and inspired by him. The society is frankly Nationalist, but seeks to serve India by the disinterested work of its members in everyday concerns, and particularly those which relate to the downtrodden classes. Its membership is small because it calls for much sacrifice and renunciation, but its spirit is far spread.

In Bombay, too, there is a very promising Social Service League which has organised free travelling libraries of books meant to be read by working people, evening classes, and lantern lectures. Its libraries are done up in boxes of from twenty-five to fifty books, the custodians of the boxes make provision for their use, and where there are illiterate people in the chawls, literates are encouraged to gather them round and read aloud to them—a familiar Indian scene. A genuine educational work is carried on by the book-box campaign. The books are in Marathi and Gujarati, and are used most encouragingly by members of the depressed classes and by women. The subjects of the lantern lectures range from “Co-operative Stores” to “The Human Body,” from “Temperance” to “Astronomy.” University extension lectures are also given, and teaching in hygiene, first aid, nursing, household management undertaken. Co-operative Credit too is a cardinal work of this League. I have seen that part in operation, and the financial benefits it has conferred upon those who have converted their debts into indebtedness to it, have been most striking. For the first time in their lives some of its members know what it is to be practically free of usurious extortion. I pause to give these details because this Society is one of many, and I wish to give assurance that the work done is well thought out and of a practical kind.

All a drop in the bucket of Indian life ! That is so. But

where the drops have fallen the muddy waters are already clearing, and those who work and watch are encouraged to go on, whilst those engaged in the wider fields of politics know they have reliable allies.

Thus political India evolves. No people can be freed from chains unless it has done something to strike them off, unless it feels their weight and their dishonour in its heart, unless its attainments in intelligence and in the things which create and uphold dignity have won the sympathy of men. India has met these tests.

Since the early days of the war when many felt that

not less than Gallic zeal  
Kindled and burned among the sapless twigs  
Of my exhausted heart,

there has been a retrogression, and

history, time's lavish scribe, will tell  
How rapidly the zealots of the cause  
Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report has been scrutinised and its flaws discovered. Slowly there has gathered an opposition to it; manifestos against it have been issued by officials and ex-officials; in an unfortunate hour the Legislative Council has passed Acts grievously menacing liberty and still more grievously destroying confidence and good feeling. As I write these last sentences, eyes shade themselves from the light, hearts harden, and the minds of men long accustomed to wield authority return to their old moods, their old fears, their old narrowness. But the way of Britain is clear; the war has illuminated it. Heavy will be the responsibility and terrible the fault of those who obstruct or darken it; bountiful will be the reward and ample the justification of those who respond to the more generous and trustful emotions which possessed them when Indian troops rode into Flanders.

## APPENDIX I

### THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

THE distribution of population, its density, and the pursuits of the people have a very direct bearing on the question of enfranchisement and elections, and Indian census Reports (amongst the most interesting publications issued by the Indian Government) afford elaborate information on this point.

The numbering of the people of India presents extraordinary difficulties on account of the size of the country, the varieties of government within it, the large numbers of people on the move at any given time, the backward state in civilisation and education of large masses, and their religious and superstitious prejudices. The first attempt was made between 1867 and 1872, but not until 1881 was any census carried out on systematic lines. Then it was but a first experiment, and every tenth year since, it has been done with greater accuracy and completeness. The bigness of the task can be estimated from the fact that about two million people were engaged upon it when it was last taken. The census of 1911 gave British India, with an area of 1,093,074 square miles, a population of 244,267,542, and the Native States, with an area of 709,583 square miles, one of 70,888,854. In the whole of India the population density is 175 persons to the square mile; in British India it is 223, and in the Native States 100. The population is massed mainly in the Ganges Valley and Punjab, on the western shore of the Bay of Bengal, in the south below the towns of Madras and Mysore, and on the coast districts south of Bombay between the hills and the sea. The chief factor in determining this density, in addition to physiographic configuration, is the climate, and a map of the rainfall follows in general features a



map of the distribution of the people. But, in addition, we see the traces of invasion and insurrection, of disease and famine, of irrigation<sup>1</sup> and of drainage. The development of commercial and industrial enterprise is hardly seen yet in the density of population outside Calcutta and Bombay, and in small localities like the mining district of Manbhum. India remains agricultural and the laws which determine the settlement of an agricultural population hold an almost unmodified sway. It has appeared to some observers<sup>2</sup> to be curious that in districts where rents are high and the cultivator is poor, population should be as dense as where rents are lower and the cultivator better off. That is, however, what we should naturally expect. In the one case, population is attracted to the soil by certain economic advantages, and in the other it is kept there by its caste cohesion, the weight of its poverty, and by the lowness of its standard of living. Generally it is true that whatever makes for successful cultivation makes for density of an agricultural population, and that law has to be supplemented by the other that a low standard of life also makes for a high density—especially in a country like India where obstacles are put in the way of a free circulation of the people.

The importance of the agricultural population in India can be seen at once by the figures. The census of 1911 showed that 9·5 per cent. lived in towns. In Assam only 3 per cent. are urban, in Bengal, 6 per cent.—only 4 per cent. if Calcutta be not taken into account; in Bihar and Orissa, 3·4 per cent.; in Bombay, 18 per cent.; in Burma, 9·3 per cent., but the town here is often an extended village and its population can hardly be accepted as urban in its characteristics; in the Central Provinces and Berar, 8 per cent.; in Madras, 11·7 per cent., but here again the official town is not always a town, but a village founded on the economy of a village; in the Punjab, 10·6 per cent.; in the United Provinces, 10·2 per cent. In Baroda, the proportion of the urban population has actually declined, but in every case the figures are not absolutely reliable owing to the prevalence of plague when the census was taken having caused an exodus from towns.

<sup>1</sup> In the Lyallpur district, for instance, a wheat-growing population of 272 to the square mile is maintained solely by irrigation on what used to be a desert.

<sup>2</sup> *Census Report*, 1911, Part I. p. 26.

With the exception of Bengal, where there is a large Mohammedan agricultural population, the trading propensities of Mohammedans draw them to urban areas, and the proportion of town-dwelling Mohammedans is therefore larger than town-dwelling Hindus. Parsis are town dwellers, and Christians are also largely found in great centres of population. Where there is an immigrant population, as the Hindus in Burma and the Hindus and Sikhs in the North-West Province, it is to be found in towns because it has come for trading purposes. It is found generally that the Mongoloid peoples of the East are attracted by towns more than the Dravidians, and the comparative largeness of the city populations of the North-West is owing to the fact that the walled city there was important for the fighting races which ruled and built capitals, and that has created a habit amongst the people. The racial proportions in towns do not correspond, therefore, with those of the country as a whole. The same is true of religious proportions.

Moreover, recent census figures show how steadily railway communication is changing the town geography of India. The old capitals and trading centres are being deserted. They are now remote from the paths of men on the banks of deserted rivers, or on roads and routes once full of a stream of traffic which no longer flows upon them.

With a direct bearing upon electoral arrangements is also the distribution of the educated population. In this respect, Burma easily holds the premier place. Three hundred and fourteen per thousand over the age of fifteen (the male proportion being 376) are literate, and they are scattered over the country; in Bengal and Madras, the figure is 77 and 75; at the bottom of the graded list are the United Provinces and the Central Provinces with Berar, boasting of 34 and 33 respectively. Taking India as a whole, the distribution of the literate population is three times as many males and nine times as many females in the cities as in the general population. Distributed amongst religions the Parsis come first with 711 per thousand literates, or 831 of persons over fifteen years of age. Of Buddhists, one in four is able to read and write, and the Christians come close upon that. The significant feature of Christian education, however, is that it is found to such a degree amongst aborigines and outcastes that the proportion of literate

people amongst these is three times as high as it is amongst Hindus, and four times more than amongst Mohammedans. One in four Indian Christian males is able to read and write. At the bottom of the grade are the Mohammedans, only 69 per thousand of whose males are literate.



## APPENDIX II

### IMPERIAL AND PROVINCIAL REVENUES

THE subordination of local to central authority is best seen when one studies the Indian system of finance. In 1833 the financial administration of India was put absolutely into the hands of the Central Government. But in 1870 Lord Mayo began a system of decentralisation by handing over to the major Provinces control of police, jails, medical services, roads, education, and a few other activities together with a fixed sum from which the charges were to be met. Excesses in cost were to be found from savings or from provincial taxes, and powers, very limited and entailing much reference to the Central Government, were given to the Provincial Governments to employ the necessary staffs. Lord Lytton was responsible for a further step in advance, beginning in 1877. The responsibilities of Provincial Governments were extended; and in order to induce them to practise economy and develop their taxable resources, certain sources of income were placed under their control. The Imperial Government kept the total income from certain revenues, divided others with the Provincial Governments, and surrendered others altogether. But each fifth year the arrangements were revised. In 1904 the system was again revised, and the present one of "quasi-permanent settlement" instituted. The theory of the present arrangement is as follows. First of all, the Indian Government retains control of the services which it thinks necessary, and the revenues required to enable it to carry on its work—opium, railways, posts and telegraphs—Provincial Governments look after what remains, and receive a definite share of the revenues which they collect. Thus the Provincial Exchequers receive all the income from the spending departments which they administer, they share equally with the Indian Government the land revenue, excise, stamps, and forest receipts, they have a share in the income of the larger irri-

gation works and the total receipts from the minor provincial ones. This system, designed for the purpose of throwing back the Provincial Governments upon their own resources and of encouraging them to develop their own incomes by improving their Provinces, has been supplemented by substantial doles from the Indian Exchequer to enable the Provinces to effect certain improvements (as in police, agriculture, and education) without delay. Minor changes that did not affect the general system were made in 1912.

The method here explained is objectionable. The general control of the Central Government must, of course, remain so as to co-ordinate the work of the Provincial Governments, but Provincial revenues should be mainly under the control of the Provinces, the contributions to the Central Government being more and more of a tribute, whilst the system of doles and large grants for specific purposes, which may be nothing more than a passing hobby of some powerful member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General, should be ended. It is liable to be wasteful and is not always in accord with the most pressing needs of the Provinces, and it allows the Central Government to exercise a control on local administration which is properly resented in the more progressive Provinces.

The changes that have been made have all tended to create an independent provincial financial system, but the Central Government has preserved its position as the sole budgeting authority. There has been much to be said for this hitherto, although Provincial Legislative Councils naturally object to it. Provincial autonomy must be consistent with a policy of Indian development, and this cannot be secured without central financial control. At present there is friction, but I can see emerging from present conditions of dispute an agreed and accepted settlement of existing difficulties in administration when the Provinces will have secured in practice a financial freedom which will not sacrifice the necessary central co-ordination, and which will place them independent of doles and so free them from unnecessary interference.

At the same time, it cannot be expected that self-respecting Provincial Governments will surrender the right to pass their own Budgets and be content to send them to the Government of India to be incorporated into an Imperial Budget. So long as the

Executive Councils of the Provinces and of India are composed of civilians belonging to the same service, and the official element on the Provincial Councils is so strong, this objection may not be felt very much; but immediately the official power is weakened, the representative bodies will want more financial liberty. The solution that ought to be aimed at is, I think, such a modification of the present system as will provide that Provincial Budgets shall be submitted to the central financial authorities as advisors whose powers of disallowance and modification shall be strictly defined, and then returned for discussion and approval to the Provincial Legislatures. On the other hand, the Imperial revenue should be derived from profitable services, like the railways, supplemented by demands upon the Provinces imposed in proportions to be fixed from time to time between Province and Province. This would put an end to the system of divided revenues, which has not much to commend it. The Indian Government should continue to be the authority for prescribing forms of accounts, methods of levying taxation, borrowing on the open market, and for dealing with all arrangements affecting the general financial administration, including customs and excise of India.

But when principles are settled, there are problems arising out of their application. I see no valid objection at all to a system by which the Imperial Government, having estimated the income from its own resources, distributes amongst the Provinces their share of the deficit and presents to them a rescript for the amount. It is done in Local Government here, and can be adopted in India. But there are certain revenues which come from impositions which, in the interests of the whole of India, ought not to be varied from Province to Province. The Land Tax, for instance, is a purely provincial matter, and there is no necessity for it to be a uniform proportion of product from one end of India to another. It is a rent and should respond to the economic laws of rent. That is not the case, however, with the Income Tax, which is a tax and not a rent, and therefore should be uniform. Commercial Stamp Duties are of the same nature. These latter ought to be Imperial revenues, and so the question arises how they can be collected. If Imperial collectors may be regarded as out of the question, there are still two methods open. The first is to make some grades of provincial officers responsible and arrange with the Provinces



for costs of collection, and the second is to make the Provinces responsible and allow them a commission. The first seems the better way. But in any event these are only matters of ways and means. The important thing is to settle that Provincial finance will be put upon an unassailable provincial basis, and that the Imperial Government, instead of being the dispenser of financial benefits, shall receive from the Provinces the means necessary to make both sides of its Budget balance; further, that the Provinces shall be free to develop their own resources with a superimposed control not for the purpose of hampering policy, but of securing the necessary uniformity and equity—and even that may soon be dispensed with.

## APPENDIX III

### THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

THE growth of co-operation in India is phenomenal, though in every sense of the word the movement is still in its infancy. In fact, in some places it seems to have spread through the atmosphere. It has been regarded as a panacea, like one of the many drugs which cure everything, advertised in the Indian press. This does not discredit the movement or throw any doubt upon its stability. It has not only come to stay, but to cure, and no country in the world can give a more sincere welcome to the co-operative spirit than India. The Indian leans upon his family, his village, his community. From the moment of his birth till that of his death, he is under obligations of a social and personal character. To him the virtues of co-operation and the spirit of interdependence are an inheritance and not an acquired habit. But the co-operation of Indian life has degenerated. The wide world market has destroyed the co-operative organisation of the village, and the moneylender has more and more individualised credit. Commercialism has split up the co-operative life of the people into separate transactions of profit-making. But the soul of the people has not gone. Their traditional modes of life are still natural to them, and these, impelled by the pressure of exploitation which is upon them, make them turn readily to the co-operative promise.

The chief quarry from which information about co-operation is to be dug is the annual reports issued by the Governments. Figures are striking, but convey only an imperfect idea of what the movement means. A few will, however, enable one to understand both its size and its stability. In Bengal the societies of all kinds increased in 1913-14 from 1,123 to 1,663, the members from 56,889 to 90,363, the working capital from Rs.4,607,301 to Rs.8,940,803. In the United Provinces the report for 1914-15 records difficulties

owing to crop failures, and the work of the year was not conspicuously successful. But the number of agricultural societies increased from 2,560 to 2,716. The amounts borrowed from the societies, totalling 27 lakhs of rupees, show their utility, as by that much did they save cultivators from moneylenders. In the same year the societies in the Central Provinces and Berar increased from 2,213 to 2,297; the membership from 40,415 to 44,085, and the working capital from 65 to 72·5 lakhs of rupees. Here, again, there were failures in crops to contend with. The Punjab, also under difficulties, showed no increase in the number of societies or of members, but did show an increase in working capital of 7·25 lakhs of rupees. The stability which the Punjab Societies evidenced is very gratifying, for the crisis through which they passed was severe.

I studied the movement a little more closely in Madras. There in 1905-6 there were only 27 societies with 2,733 members, a working capital of Rs.107,651, and a meagre reserve of Rs.689; in seven years there were 1,078 societies, 82,713 members, Rs.9,548,750 capital, and Rs.443,000 in reserve. It is also noteworthy that whereas in the first of these years 32 per cent. of the members were agricultural, in the latter the percentage was 59. In this Province we also see the tendency to use these societies as Savings' Banks, for the deposits of non-members in the first year were 7 per cent. of the capital, whereas in the latter year they were 26 per cent. At first the Madras societies were helped by loans from both the Imperial and the Provincial Governments, but these have been discontinued because they are no longer required. To supply the needs of the societies and to organise their credit are two central banks—the Madras Central Urban Bank, a joint-stock society dealing only with registered Co-operative Societies, but neither managed nor controlled by them; and the Madura-Ramnad Co-operative District Bank, Ltd., which is a banking union of societies in the district. Banks of the latter type will in time control the grand finance of the movement so that the whole work will be put upon a self-contained basis of self-government.

The societies themselves show different modes of working, and greater uniformity is desirable. Some are of limited liability, others are not—some work with a large proportion of capital paid up, others are not so particular; but that they all supply a need is



seen by the loans they have paid—one hopes that in every case it is a real need. In 1908-9 the agricultural societies alone gave 6,951 loans; in 1912-13 they gave 27,835—the sum loaned in the former year being Rs.694,462, in the latter Rs.2,306,447. The non-agricultural societies gave in the same years 2,362 and 6,981 loans, of Rs.269,759 and Rs.842,764 respectively.

The Indian cultivator undoubtedly spends money and has no notion of keeping out of debt. It was therefore feared that co-operative credit, instead of being used to improve agriculture and the lot of the peasant, would only widen the margin of credit and be a new incentive to expenditure, and the Government tried, by regulations defining the purposes for which loans were to be granted, to protect the cultivator and the societies against this. The result has been good. Fifty-six per cent. of the loans issued in Madras in 1912-13 were for production purposes, 41 per cent. to clear off old debts most of which bore usurious rates of interest, and only 3 per cent. for non-productive expenditure. That is for the agricultural societies. For the non-agricultural societies the figures are almost as good, being 49, 38, and 13 respectively. The non-productive borrowings were mainly for marriages, the expenses for which in India (until there is a revolution in habits) are not only essential, but cannot be cut down.

The redemption of old debt is most important, though some of the superficial critics of the movement always seize upon the figures under this heading to try to diminish the importance of co-operation. Thus, not only is the income of the cultivator relieved of heavy usurious charges—sometimes up to nearly 40 per cent.—not only is it possible for him to pay off his borrowings with interest on a considerably lower charge than his interest alone used to impose,<sup>1</sup> but he becomes a freer man altogether, and, so far from teaching him more extravagance, this freedom gives him a chance of learning what economy means. In one of his reports the registrar of the Punjab societies says regarding the conversion of *bunnia* indebtedness into co-operative-society indebtedness: “It will thus be seen that members have replaced one form of

<sup>1</sup> “At a low computation, we save the agriculturists of India from an absolutely unnecessary burden of at least 10 lakhs of rupees on every crore of rupees lent out by the Co-operative Societies” (Sir E. MacLagan, *Registrars' Conference*, 1912).

indebtedness amounting to at least 30 lakhs by another amounting to 72 lakhs, and they are still further this much to the good in so far as the interest they pay on the new form of debt is very much lighter than what they paid on the previous form, while they have recovered cultivating possession of valuable ancestral lands amounting to no less than 8,000 acres." That is a very striking statement showing the back-breaking oppressiveness of the moneylender upon the Indian cultivator.

Whoever visits Conjeeveram to see its famous temples would do well to direct his steps to the workshops of the Co-operative Productive Society. It is for weavers. The people one meets there are imbued with the co-operative idea exactly like the workmen in a similar factory here. The society supplies looms, raw material, and capital; it buys the products of its members and sells them to the best advantage. It divides its profits between its reserve funds, its management, and its weavers, and it employs the attractions of a bonus to encourage regularity in habits and excellence in work. It has had its ups and downs, but the time I spent looking round it and hearing from its moving spirits what their hopes and fears were was full of the most lively interest.

There are also co-operative trading societies, but I found these still in a struggling infancy, experimenting to find a field and a method, and complaining of the hardness of their task. But of the future I have no doubt, whatever disappointments may intervene between now and final success. In time, the usurious moneylender will go, the parasitic middleman will go, and co-operation will take their place in the interests of the cultivator and the craftsman.

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